



NICK CARTER WEEKLY

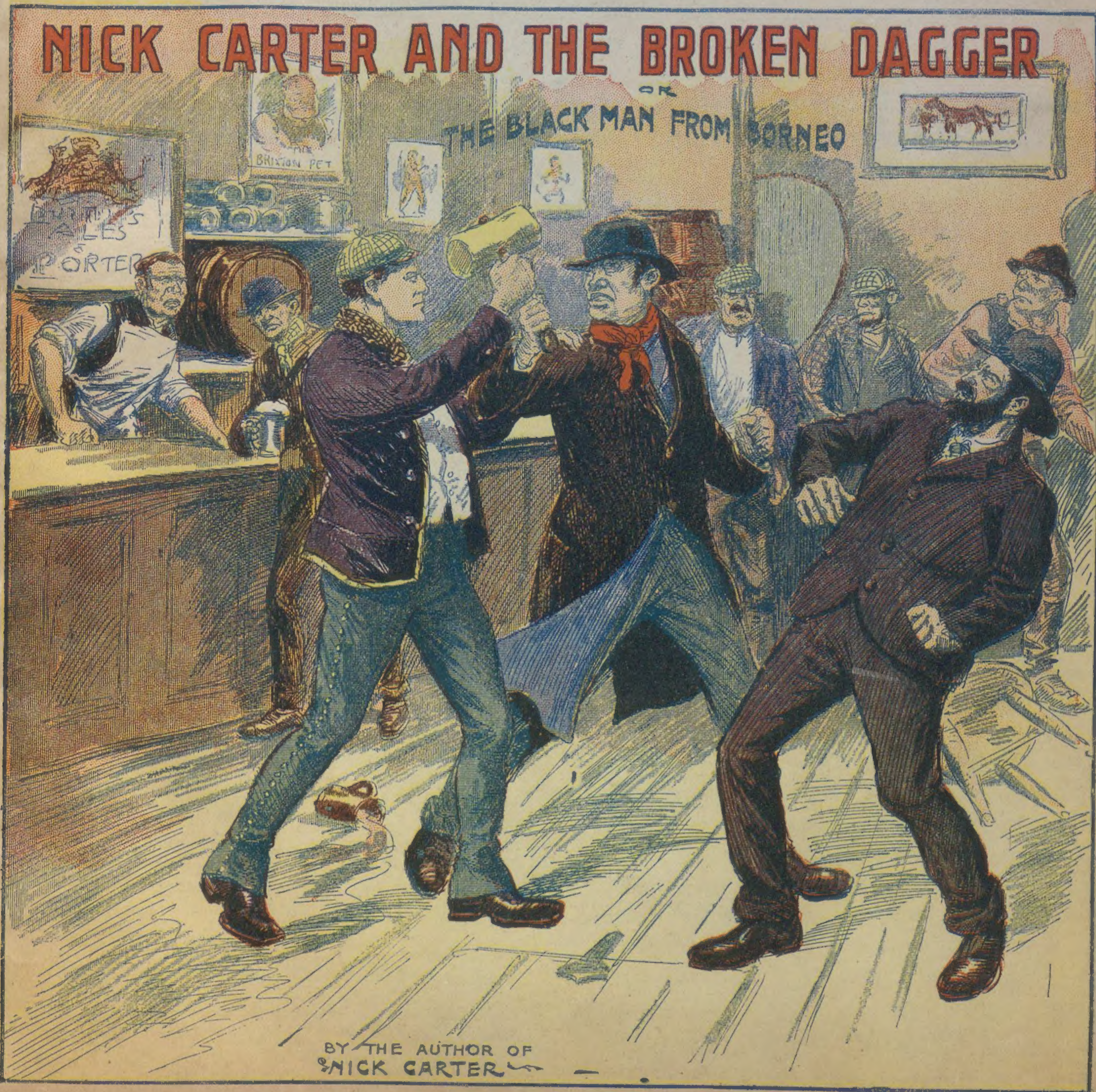
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No. 268.

Price, Five Cents.

NICK CARTER AND THE BROKEN DAGGER

OR
THE BLACK MAN FROM BORNEO



BY THE AUTHOR OF
NICK CARTER

"FAIR PLAY!" CRIED THE COSTER; "DON'T 'IT A MAN FER SPEAKIN' 'IS MIND!"



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NEW YORK, February 15, 1902.

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Nick Carter and the Broken Dagger;

OR,

THE BLACK MAN FROM BORNEO.

By the author of "NICHOLAS CARTER."

CHAPTER I.

THE PRISONER.

The warden of Old Bailey Prison, in London, was in his private office when the head keeper of the prison came in.

He did not look up from the work he was doing, but asked:

"What is it, Markle?"

"A man wants to see the prisoner, Jan Pallog," replied the head keeper.

The warden laid down his pen and swung around in his chair.

"Pallog?" he repeated. "Pallog? Odd name. Who is he?"

"He is a Roumelian, and he is held on a charge of assault with intent to kill."

"Oh! I begin to remember. The trouble took place in a Regent street jewelry shop, I believe?"

"Part of it, sir. There seems to be a good deal back of it. The prisoner was up for examination in police court this morning and was remanded for another examination to-morrow, when it is supposed that other charges will be brought against him."

"There was something about a valuable diamond, wasn't there?"

"Yes, sir; a diamond found in Borneo and intended for the crown of the Queen of Roumelia."

"Pallog was taking it home, wasn't he?"

"Well, he was supposed to be, sir, but I understand he really tried to steal the diamond."

"Indeed!"

"Yes; he faked a story about how the stone was stolen from him in New York. The Roumelian con-

sul-general in that city engaged the famous detective, Nick Carter, to investigate the matter."

"And I suppose Carter spotted Pallog."

"He did. The three men known as the Carter detectives chased Pallog across the ocean, recovered the stone, gave it to the Roumelian minister here, and Pallog was arrested when he tried to kill young Patsy—one of the Carters, you know."

"Yes, I know. So the Carters are in London, are they?"

"They are. Pallog is held in the hope that the Carters will bring charges against him for having tried to murder Patsy on board the steamship *Umbria*, and it is supposed that the Roumelian minister will also charge him with robbery."

"And at present he is held only on the charge of assault?"

"That's all, sir."

"It's enough. He'll get a long term for that."

"Sure, for the evidence is as plain as daylight."

"Well, what about this visitor?"

"He says he is a countryman of Pallog's, and wants to advise him."

"Is he a lawyer?"

"He didn't say so, but I suppose he is."

"Bring him in here."

Markle, the head keeper, went out and returned in a moment with a dark-complexioned man, who wore a heavy black beard.

The warden looked at him sharply.

"Do you want to see Jan Pallog?" he asked.

"I do," was the reply, in good English, but with a thick accent.

"Are you a relation of his?"

"No, sir."

"A friend?"

"Yes; I knew him in my country."

"What is your name?"

"Paul Vlastock."

"Where were you acquainted with him?"

"In Adrianople."

"Are you a lawyer?"

"I am in my own country."

"Why do you wish to see him?"

"I want to offer to help him. He should have a lawyer. It is his right, isn't it?"

"Certainly."

"Well, your law may not allow me to defend him in court, but I might be able to engage a lawyer for him."

"And you want to ask him about that."

"That is all, unless he should wish to send some message to his family."

"Very well. We will ask the prisoner if he would like to see you. If he says yes, and you are willing to be searched before going to him, there will be no objection."

"Must I be searched?"

"That is the rule."

"Then I agree."

The warden nodded to Markle, who went out.

When the head keeper returned, he said:

"The prisoner would like to see Mr. Vlastock."

"Very well; search him."

Markle examined Vlastock's pockets, felt of the linings of his clothes, and declared that he found nothing to prevent the visit.

Then Vlastock was led to a room which was divided into two parts by an iron grating that reached from the floor to the ceiling.

He waited there with a guard for a minute or two while another guard went to get the prisoner.

At last Pallog came in.

He was dressed in the same clothes that he had worn while crossing the ocean.

As he had not yet been tried in court, he had not been compelled to put on a prison uniform.

Pallog was on one side of the iron grating, Vlastock on the other.

A guard stayed on the side with Pallog also, so that the conversation between the two men was heard by two officers of the prison.

Vlastock shook hands with the prisoner through the grating.

"How goes it?" he asked, in Roumelian.

"As you see," responded Pallog. "I wish there was better light here. Ask the guard if we can't have another gas jet."

This answer was in Roumelian, and, in the same language, Vlastock said:

"Guard, can't we have a little more light?"

Neither of the guards stirred.

The one on Vlastock's side of the grating was sitting on a chair near the door.

On the prisoner's side the guard was walking slowly back and forth.

"It's all right," remarked Pallog. "Neither of them understand our language."

"Then we can talk freely," said Vlastock.

"Just as if we were alone."

"I learned of your trouble by a paragraph in the newspapers."

"I suppose so."

"Is it serious, Jan?"

"Serious! I should say so! It will be imprisonment for life if I let them try me."

"That's bad. How did you happen to get into such a scrape?"

"Didn't you hear about the diamond?" asked Pallog, with a look of surprise.

"I heard some mention of a diamond, but did not understand it. What about it?"

"Why, Paul, I had obtained a stone in Borneo that is more valuable than any other in the world. I got it for the queen, but I decided while I was crossing America that I could make good use of it myself."

"I see."

"I pretended that it had been stolen. Then some devilish sharp American detectives got on my track and took it away from me. They stole the diamond, Paul, and put in place of it a worthless piece of glass. I tried to sell that piece of glass to a jeweler. Then, when the detective showed up with the genuine stone, I was so crazy with rage that I tried to kill him, but he was too quick for me, and here I am."

Vlastock thought a moment.

"I suspected that there must be something of that sort," he said, "and that was why I didn't give my full name when I called to see you."

"That was right," returned the prisoner, "if you had said that you were my brother they might not have let you see me."

"Yes, they would; but if they knew I was your brother they might watch us more carefully."

"Certainly. Tell me, Paul, have you thought of some way to get me out of here?"

"I am thinking now."

The prisoner's eyes flashed.

"Give me a day's liberty," he whispered, "and I will get that stone again, and we will both be rich—immensely rich, Paul!"

"You say you could get that stone again," he said, coolly. "Tell me, are you sure it is so valuable?"

"I have the word of the New York diamond dealers for it."

"What makes you think you can get it again?"

"I think so because it is worth any effort. I would not let anything stand in the way. I would kill the man who has it!"

"And that man is——"

"The Roumelian minister."

"Would you kill him?"

"If necessary; but it won't be, for he will send the stone by messenger to Adrianople."

"And you would tackle the messenger?"

"Yes."

"Won't the stone be kept here for cutting?"

"Possibly; or they may send it to Amsterdam. In any case, it will be in the hands of a messenger. I can watch the minister's house, follow the messenger——"

"I see; but to do that you must be free."

"Of course."

"Well, Jan, I think there's a way."

"Good! What——"

"Wait. This stone will be valuable enough to make both of us rich. Is that what you say?"

"It is."

"Now, I would work hard for many years to be rich."

"Yes."

"Why shouldn't I spend a year or two in jail for the same purpose?"

"Eh?"

"I say that I would be willing to spend a year or two in jail, if I knew that I would be a very rich man when I got out."

"Of course you would! So would I, but I've got to be free to get the stone."

"Exactly, for if I should follow the messenger and get it, you would still be locked up."

"Yes, with a long sentence—life, perhaps—and if I don't get free before I am sentenced there will be small hope for me."

"That is just what I am thinking."

"Well?"

"Suppose," said Paul, slowly, "I should go to jail for you? You could then get the stone and save my share till my sentence should run out."

"I don't understand."

"You surprise me. Have you forgotten how we both look alike?"

"No, for we are twins. Your beard——"

"Is false. I came here with the idea that I might take your place. You see, if I help you to escape, they will put me in jail for it, but the sentence won't be a very long one."

"Splendid! And would you make that sacrifice for me, Paul?"

"For you and my share of the stone."

"Agreed, of course! But how is it to be done?"

"I am thinking."

"This grating," said Pallog, eagerly, "might be broken, perhaps——"

"Nonsense! there are two guards to stop us."

"Then how——"

"Be patient. Unbutton your coat, Jan."

Pallog did so.

"I see," said Paul, thoughtfully, "you have on a suit of blue serge. It is well worn. I can probably

find one like it in a second-hand shop. My overcoat and hat will help. The beard will do the rest. Leave it to me, Jan."

"I will, Paul; but there must be no delay. I was captured yesterday. The stone may be sent away this afternoon."

"If I succeed, it will be inside of an hour."

"Pallog's eyes flashed again. His lips parted to speak, but the guards approached them."

"Time's up," they said.

"Good-by," said Paul, putting his hand through the grating.

Pallog grasped it, responded "Good-by," and turned away.

He was led back to his cell, and Paul went with the other guard to the prison office.

CHAPTER II.

PAUL'S SCHEME.

Paul stopped in the office to speak to the head keeper.

"The prisoner has asked me to engage a lawyer for him," he said.

Head-keeper Markle nodded. The matter didn't interest him.

"That will probably make it necessary for me to see him again soon," added Paul.

"Well," responded Markle, "the warden will probably allow it, but you'd better get an order from court."

"I will try to do so."

It was the season for fogs in London, and on this day, although it was only half-an-hour after noon, the streets were very dark.

All the street lamps were lighted, but they did no good.

A man could just see them shining if he got within ten feet, but they threw no light to the sidewalk.

When Paul left the Old Bailey and crossed the street, he paused and looked back.

He could not see the prison wall.

"The weather is on our side," he muttered.

It was not an easy matter to find one's way in the city, for the fog was so thick that street signs could not be read, but Paul knew his ground. A few minutes after leaving the prison he was in a second-hand clothing store, where he found a suit of blue serge that fitted him well enough.

He bought it and put it on, leaving the other suit to be called for.

Then he went to the law courts at the head of Fleet street.

He bought a newspaper near the entrance and got close to a gas jet in a waiting-room to read it.

Among the long items he found one about a man named Townsend, who had been arrested the day before for forgery.

The last line of this item read:

Townsend will be taken before Justice Ford for examination this morning.

"That will do," said Paul to himself, as he looked at his watch. "Justice Ford has gone to luncheon by this time."

He hunted around in the building until he found the room where Justice Ford held court.

Nobody was in it except a clerk.

Paul went to the clerk's desk and said:

"I beg your pardon, sir, but can you tell me what was done in the Townsend matter this morning?"

"Townsend?" repeated the clerk, inquiringly; "what was it about?"

"I believe he was charged with forgery."

"Oh, yes, I remember now. Let me see. There were so many cases this morning——"

The clerk was looking over a bundle of papers.

"I think," he added, "that Townsend was held for trial. The commitment paper must be in his honor's private room. I don't believe he's signed it yet."

"I wish I could know for certain," said Paul.

"Are you from his lawyer?"

"No, but I've had business dealings with Townsend——"

"I see. Well, wait a minute and I will look up the paper."

The clerk stepped into a side room.

The moment he was gone, Paul reached over and took a lot of papers from the desk.

He examined them rapidly, and presently put all of them back, except one.

That he stuck into his pocket.

When the clerk returned he had a paper in his hand, which he showed to Paul, saying:

"His honor has signed it, you see, sir."

"Yes," responded Paul, with what seemed to be a careless glance at the paper, "that is all I wanted to know. Thank you."

"You are welcome, sir."

Paul started away, but turned back quickly.

"By the way," he said, "assault cases are tried in this court, are they not?"

"Certainly, sir."

"There was a man arrested for assault yesterday—Pallog by name—who was examined in the Old Bailey Court this morning. If he is held for trial, he'll be brought here, won't he?"

"Undoubtedly, sir."

"When?"

"Oh! as to that, I can't say, sir."

"Very well; thank you again."

Paul left the building and went to the writing-room of a hotel near by.

Although he had not seemed to see the paper the clerk showed him, he had fastened his eyes sharply on the justice's name at the bottom.

It was "Archibald Ford," and written in a bold, heavy hand.

"I'm no good," thought Paul, "if I can't put up an imitation of that writing that will go at Old Bailey."

He wrote the justice's name several times upon a sheet of hotel paper before he took from his pocket the paper that he had stolen from the clerk's desk.

It was an order from court addressed to the warden of Old Bailey Prison.

Blanks were left for date and names as follows:

(Date).....

Permit Mr.....to see.....in his cell.

(Signed).....

Justice.

Paul filled in the date in his natural handwriting. Then, after the words "Permit Mr." he wrote "Paul Vlastock," after "to see" he put "Jan Pallog," and he signed the name "Archibald Ford" in imitation of the justice's handwriting.

He allowed the ink to dry while he tore up the experiments he had made on hotel paper, and threw them on the fire.

Then he folded his pass and went back to the Old Bailey.

It was much less than an hour from the time when he had been there before.

Having come to the head keeper's desk, he handed over the forged order.

"All right," said Markle, with a glance at the paper. "You don't waste time, do you?"

"Not when I'm on business," replied Paul, coldly.

Markle called a guard.

"Take this gentleman to cell one hundred and twenty-five," he ordered.

"This way, sir," said the guard, and Paul followed him.

They went through a long hallway and around a bend to another, having to stop twice on the way for guards to unlock and open gates for them.

"Whew!" exclaimed Paul, taking off his overcoat, "it's hot in here."

"Yes, sir," responded the guard; the air is thick and close everywhere to-day."

He opened the door of cell one hundred and twenty-five and Paul stepped in.

"Ah!" said Pallog, in English, "you are back quickly."

"Yes," responded Paul, in the same language, "I found no difficulty." The solicitor who will take your case will come to see you late in the afternoon. Meantime, he wants you to sign this paper."

So saying, Paul took a sheet of blank paper from a pocket.

"Dear me!" he exclaimed, "I forgot to tell the head keeper that I needed pen and ink."

He looked inquiringly at the guard.

"Will a stylograph do?" asked the latter.

"I suppose so."

"The man at the gate has one."

"Will he lend it to me for a minute?"

"I think so, sir."

"Ask him, please."

The guard went back to the bend in the hallway. No sooner had he left the cell door than Paul whisked his false beard from his face.

It then appeared with only a short, black mustache. He looked exactly like his brother Jan.

"Quick!" whispered Paul, handing the beard to Jan.

There was no need of the command.

Pallog saw the scheme, and was already fastening the beard to his face.

Paul took off his hat and placed it on his brother's head.

They changed places, Paul sitting down on the prison cot, Jan remaining on his feet.

The overcoat had been thrown upon the stool in the cell.

"Here you are, sir," said the guard, returning with a stylograph pen.

He handed it in at the door, and Pallog took it.

"Now, Jan," said he, addressing Paul, "just write your name at the bottom and I will take the paper back to the solicitor's office."

Paul wrote "Jan Pallog" on the paper, and gave the pen back.

"Is that all?" he asked.

"That is all," replied Jan, "and as we don't want to lose time in finding bail for you I will go at once."

"Very well," said Paul.

Jan put on his brother's overcoat and turned to the guard.

"Thank you for your trouble about the pen," said he. "Will you have to go back with me?"

"Yes, sir. None of the gate keepers would let you pass if I wasn't with you."

"Indeed!"

"The rules are strict, sir."

"But I shouldn't suppose they would try to make a prisoner of me."

The guard laughed.

"They would have to," he said, "until the head keeper or the warden could be called to give orders."

"Well, I don't want to be made a prisoner. It's bad enough to see my friend here. Good-by, Mr. Pallog."

Jan had finished buttoning his coat.

"Good-by, Mr. Vlastock, and thank you for your kindness," said Paul.

The guard closed the door, and Jan went with him through the long hallway to the office.

There he had to stop for half-a-minute while a clerk made a record of the visit.

"You didn't have much to say this time," remarked Markle, as Pallog stood near his desk.

"No," responded Pallog, imitating his brother's voice. "I only wanted the prisoner to sign his name to a paper."

"We could have saved you trouble by bringing him out here to do that."

"I didn't know that. Never mind. The thing is done."

The clerk finished his record and Markle took up a newspaper.

Pallog walked to the entrance, where the turnkey opened the outer door for him.

"Beastly day, sir," said the turnkey.

"Better outside than in," responded Pallog, cheerfully.

He turned toward Fleet street and had not gone a dozen paces before he was out of sight in the fog.

"I wonder," he chuckled, "how soon Paul will let them know that they've got the wrong man? If they don't find it out for themselves, he'll wait until I have had time to act. I won't lose a minute. While they all think I'm behind the bars, I can work with safety

in this disguise. I'll buy a knife and a revolver with some of this money that Paul slipped into my hand, and then go for a look at the Roumelian minister's house."

CHAPTER III.

THE MESSENGER.

Early in the afternoon of the day when Pallog made his escape from the Old Bailey, an important discussion was taking place in the office of the Roumelian minister in London.

The persons who took part in it were the minister and his secretary.

"I think the stone should be sent to Amsterdam," said the minister.

"Why?" asked the minister.

"Because there are better diamond cutters there."

"That is true."

"I hate to trust such a valuable stone to these London men."

"Then why not send it, sir?"

"I am afraid to."

"Afraid?"

"Yes."

The minister took a small box from a drawer in his desk and opened it by pressing a spring.

When the cover rose it showed the crown diamond sparkling wonderfully.

"It's a beauty!" exclaimed the secretary.

"Indeed it is, and I am afraid to let it go out of my hands. Think of Pallog. It tempted him to steal it."

"You might take it to Amsterdam yourself."

"As you know, I cannot leave London just at present, and there ought not to be much delay."

"But you can trust Peter Blowitz. He has been messenger for this office for twenty years."

"Yes; I can trust Blowitz. He would not steal the diamond. And yet I am afraid."

"Of what?"

"I can hardly tell, but that clever American detective pointed out the fact that this diamond is a

great temptation to crime. He thinks, too, that a native of Borneo, a black man, is chasing Pallog around the world to get it."

"But Pallog is locked up."

"The black man isn't."

"How do we know that there is a black man?"

"We don't know. Mr. Carter thinks——"

"Bah! pardon me, sir, but a detective is likely to think a good many things. Probably he wanted to frighten you into engaging him to protect the messenger until he should deliver the stone to the queen in Adrianople."

"I don't think Mr. Carter is that kind of a man."

"Maybe he isn't, but——"

"He never mentioned such a thing. If he had wanted me to engage him for that purpose, he would have spoken of it."

"Well, it's not for me to say, but I should send the stone to Amsterdam at once."

The minister was silent for a full minute.

Then he closed the box and put it back in his desk.

He touched a bell.

An elderly man came in at once, and bowed respectfully.

"Blowitz," said the minister, "I want you to get ready to go to Amsterdam at once."

"As you please, sir."

"Can you take the next train?"

"I don't know when it goes, sir."

The minister glanced at his secretary, who crossed the room and examined a railway guide.

"A train leaves Charing Cross at two," he said. "It makes direct connection with the Holland boat, and Blowitz could arrive in Amsterdam by nine o'clock to-morrow morning."

"Can you catch that train?" asked the minister, addressing the messenger.

"I have only to put a few things in my bag, sir."

"Do so, then, and come here for your instructions."

Blowitz bowed and went out.

"I am glad you have decided to send the stone away, sir," said the secretary.

"What makes you feel that way?"

"To tell the truth, sir, I am a little afraid myself."

"Indeed!"

"Yes; I can't help thinking of the danger of having an article of such enormous value in our care."

The minister smiled.

"You would rather risk old Blowitz than yourself," he remarked.

The secretary made no reply, and a moment later he was at work on something that took him to another room.

Shortly after he had gone, Blowitz returned for his instructions, which were given briefly.

"Send me word as soon as you arrive in Amsterdam," said the minister, "and don't agree to a bargain with the diamond cutters until you have consulted me."

"I understand, sir."

The messenger went out to the street where there was a cab that he had sent for.

He got in, telling the driver to take him to the Charing Cross railway station.

"I want to catch a two o'clock train," he added.

"I'll try for it," replied the driver, "but I can't promise. The fog is so thick that I can't drive fast."

Both the driver and the messenger heard light steps hurrying away before the cab started, but they thought nothing of it.

The fog was so thick that they could hardly see the horse's head.

There was nothing to arouse their suspicion in the fact that somebody who knew the way was hurrying along the street.

They knew that anybody could have stood unseen near enough to hear the order given to go to Charing Cross, but they thought nothing of that, either.

Why should they?

Probably a hundred men were going to Charing Cross in different parts of the great city at that minute.

The cab driver picked his way skillfully through the streets and brought the messenger to the station several minutes ahead of train time.

Obedying the instructions he had received from the minister, the messenger engaged a first-class compartment for himself alone, and a porter showed him to it.

"Will you be getting out again, sir, before the train starts?" asked the porter.

"No," replied Blowitz, "you may lock the door."

The porter called to a train guard, who came up and locked the door.

Blowitz put his bag on one seat and sat down on the other.

He put a rug over his knees and settled back comfortably.

He had bought some newspapers, but the light from the lamp hanging from the roof was not bright enough to read by on account of the fog, which was thicker than ever.

"As soon as the train gets a few miles from the city," thought Blowitz, "there will be no fog, and I shall be able to read."

He closed his eyes and fell to thinking of the important errand the minister had given him.

The minutes passed quickly.

A guard ran along the station platform trying the handle of the car doors to see that they were locked.

The conductor blew a whistle as a signal to the engineer.

This was answered by two shrill toots from the engine.

The train started.

At first it moved very slowly.

The figure of a man suddenly appeared from the fog at the door of the compartment in which Blowitz sat.

He had on a coat that came down to his heels, and the collar was turned up above his ears.

Blowitz did not stir.

He did not see the figure.

If he had he would have supposed that it was a station porter, or a train hand.

The man in the long coat grasped the door handle, and, holding it hard, got his toes on the narrow strip

of wood that runs along the side of the car below the door.

He turned his back to the door.

Then he pushed his shoulder so hard against the glass window set in the upper half of the door that it broke.

Several pieces of the pane fell inward.

Instantly the long-coated man turned, and, with his elbow, knocked out other pieces.

In less than a second he had cleared a large opening. He got his gloved hands on the edge of the window then and crawled in.

Blowitz, who had been startled by the breaking glass, looked up.

By that time the man was half-way through the window.

The messenger tried to retreat to the further side of the carriage.

His legs got twisted in his rug, and he half fell to the floor.

Blowitz was then helpless against the man, who attacked him furiously.

That much of this strange affair became known when the train was stopped, as it was a moment later.

Railroad men on the foggy station platform heard the breaking of glass.

They could not see what was going on, but they knew that something serious had happened.

They supposed that it was an accident.

"Has somebody run a luggage truck into the train?" shouted the head baggage man.

Nobody could say.

The sound of breaking glass had ceased.

"Stop the train!" cried another railroad man.

The station agent, who was on the platform, had heard the noise and the shouts.

He blew a whistle and sent a man to the dispatcher's office.

A porter ran alongside the moving train, rapping on the window of the last compartment.

The conductor of the train was in that compartment.

"Stop her!" shouted the porter.

The conductor pulled the signal cord and the train stopped before the last car had got outside the station.

Then the station agent, guards and others ran along the side of the train looking for the damage.

"Here it is," cried a guard, when he came to the broken window.

He grasped the door handle and pulled himself up so that he could look in.

"Great Heaven!" he gasped, jumping down again.

His face was ghastly pale.

"What's the matter?" demanded the station agent, coming up at that moment.

"Look, sir," replied the guard; "I dassent. There's been murder done!"

"Murder!"

The station agent raised himself to the window.

He looked in.

For a moment he was speechless with horror.

Then he called to a guard with a shaking voice.

"Unlock this door."

The guard got out his key and the door was opened.

When the station agent and others crowded inside, they found Blowitz doubled up on the floor, bleeding from wounds in the throat and chest.

The messenger was dead.

The position of his body showed how he had tried to get out of the way and how his legs had got tangled in his rug.

It took but a glance to show that his clothing had been rifled, for some of the pockets were turned inside out.

His traveling bag was gone.

There was no sign of the murderer.

The window of the door on the other side of the car was open.

"He got out that way," said a guard.

"Must have worked like lightning," remarked another.

"Who is he?" asked a third.

A policeman came up.

His experienced eye took in the situation quickly.

"The murderer must have crossed the river on the footway," he said.

It should be explained that the Charing Cross railway station is on the bank of the river Thames.

All trains from there go directly from the station to a bridge that crosses the river.

There is no roadway for ordinary carriages, but alongside the railroad tracks there is a wide path for pedestrians.

This pathway is much used by persons who live in London.

The policeman thought that the murderer, having killed and robbed his man, had got out of the car by the window of the other door, and that he had then got onto the footpath and crossed the river.

An investigation was started at once.

A railroad man was sent across the river on the footpath to make inquiries and to warn the police on the other side.

Meantime, the dead body of Blowitz was taken from the car and the train went on.

This, however, was not done until every compartment on the train had been searched to see if the murderer had hidden himself in any of them.

No trace of him was found.

Nobody alive had seen him, no one knew even that the murderer was a man, though nobody supposed that a woman could have done such a deed.

The police were confident at first that the criminal would be found quickly.

It did not seem possible that he could go far with the stolen traveling bag without attracting attention that would serve as a clue.

Detectives from Scotland Yard were called by telephone, and within half-an-hour of the murder a dozen of them were at work on the case.

When evening came they were just where they were at the beginning.

CHAPTER IV.

NICK CARTER'S THEORY.

Nick Carter and his assistants had made their plans to start for America on the day following the events described.

They were staying at the Tavistock Hotel, and, having the afternoon with nothing to do, they had gone to a theatre.

On their way to the hotel after the performance, they heard newsboys crying extra editions.

"All about the terrible murder!"

"Man killed in a railway carriage!"

"Mysterious murder and robbery!"

Nick bought several papers.

"We shall have to see about this," he said. "It's nothing that we have anything to do with, but it's in our line and it sounds interesting."

The detectives found that the papers had only a few lines about the affair.

It had happened too late for the reporters to get complete accounts for the evening papers.

All that the detectives learned, therefore, was that an unknown man had been murdered in a train at Charing Cross, but every paper was sure that the police were hot on the trail of the murderer.

"We might offer to help the Scotland Yard fellows," said Patsy, jokingly.

"Not much!" responded Nick. "I want to go home."

When they got to the hotel, the clerk told them that a gentleman was waiting to see them in the reading-room.

Nick and the others went to the reading-room and found the Roumelian minister.

"Mr. Carter," said the minister, in a trembling voice, "a terrible thing has happened. I need your professional assistance."

Instantly it flashed upon all three that the crown diamond had been stolen.

None of them said anything about it there, for a dozen or more men were within hearing.

"Come to my room," said Nick.

Arrived there, the detective pointed to a chair and said:

"Explain."

The minister was too nervous to sit down.

"Mr. Carter," he said, "I sent a trusted messenger to Amsterdam this afternoon on business in connection with the diamond you cleverly saved from that thief, Jan Pallog."

Nick nodded.

"My messenger was foully murdered——"

"Ah! at Charing Cross?"

"Yes. Have you heard?"

"I have seen the papers."

"But they say nothing of my messenger."

"I simply inferred."

"Very well; I want you to bring the murderer to justice. The Scotland Yard men are making no headway. They are completely mystified."

Nick was thinking rapidly during this statement.

Turning to Chick, he said:

"Telephone the warden of Old Bailey and ask him if he still has Jan Pallog there."

"That will be unnecessary," interrupted the minister. "I have already asked that question."

"When?"

"An hour ago."

"Well?"

"The warden replied that Pallog is there. I see that your suspicions were the same as mine."

"That Pallog was the murderer?"

"Yes. I thought he must have made his escape somehow and that he killed poor old Blowitz in the hope of getting the diamond."

"I did have a suspicion of that kind," said Nick, "but if Pallog is still behind the bars we must look elsewhere for the murderer."

"He has an accomplice, Mr. Carter."

"Indeed?"

"One who called on him this forenoon, or about noon the second time, I believe."

"How do you know this?"

"The warden told me over the telephone."

"Ah! let me know all that was said."

"It is very little. A man called at the prison, saying that he was a countryman of Pallog and asking to see him."

"Was he admitted?"

"Certainly. He conversed with the prisoner for several minutes in the presence of two guards."

"What about?"

"Nobody knows. They spoke Roumelian."

"Ah!"

"Later, the friend called again for just a moment and saw Pallog in his cell."

"Then he must have had an order from court."

"He did, but it was a forgery."

"So?"

"Yes. That fact was discovered by accident two or three hours afterward. Now, what do you make of it, Mr. Carter?"

"I'd rather hear what you make of it."

"Well, I have no doubt that Pallog and his friend spoke together about the diamond. I believe that Pallog gave his friend all the information he had about it, how it was in my possession, and how it would probably be sent to Amsterdam by messenger, and that the friend shadowed my office to attack any messenger I might send out. Is that a good theory?"

"It sounds well."

"But I see you do not believe it?"

"Not quite."

"But——"

"Wait a minute. Excuse me."

Nick turned to Patsy.

"Jump into a cab," he said, "and go down to the steamship office in Trafalgar Square and countermand our order for staterooms by to-morrow's boat."

The Roumelian minister drew a long breath.

"I am glad to hear that," he said, "for it means that you will undertake the case."

"Yes," Nick responded, "I will see it through. The loss of that diamond a second time——"

"But it isn't lost, Mr. Carter!"

"What?"

For answer, the minister took a small box from his pocket, pressed the sides, the cover flew up, and there lay the diamond that had caused already a great deal of trouble.

"Blowitz didn't have it with him," said the minister.

"Was Blowitz the name of your messenger who was murdered?"

"Yes."

For one instant the great detective seemed to be staggered.

Patsy had started from the room the moment Nick spoke to him, but he was at the door when the minister said that the stone had not been lost.

Thinking that that fact might make Nick change his mind, he waited.

After a short pause Nick said:

"Go ahead, Patsy. This matter interests me and we will take care of it."

Patsy went away.

"I must have misunderstood you," Nick then said to the minister. "I thought Blowitz had been murdered for the diamond. Didn't you say you sent him to Amsterdam on business connected with the stone?"

"Yes. I wanted him to get terms for cutting it."

"Was that all?"

The minister hesitated.

"Better tell me everything," exclaimed Nick. "It doesn't pay to let me misunderstand you."

"I didn't mean to mislead you," said the minister, "and, for that matter, I do believe Blowitz was murdered for the diamond. The murderer must have believed that Blowitz had the stone with him. He didn't——"

"You hesitated a moment ago. Why?"

"Well, Mr. Carter, the truth is I sent poor Blowitz on that errand as an experiment."

"You wanted to see whether anybody was still on the track of that diamond."

"I did."

"And you have found out?"

"I have, and I am dreadfully sorry. I didn't really believe that my messenger would be harmed, but I thought that if he got to Amsterdam without being troubled it would show that it was safe to carry the diamond anywhere."

"I think your plan was a good one," said Nick.

The minister looked relieved.

"I was afraid," he responded, "that you would say I was responsible for the death of Blowitz."

"Not at all. You are responsible for the diamond. If you had sent it by Blowitz he would have been killed just the same, and you would have lost the stone."

"That's it, Mr. Carter; and, now I know that there is danger for anybody who carries it. That is why I keep it with me. I will take all the risks myself."

"Better not take any. Carry it to the Bank of England and have it locked up in the deepest vault."

"I will do so to-morrow. It is too late to-day."

"That will be your only safe course until we have caught the fellow who did this murder."

"Pallog's accomplice?"

"Maybe. We'll see. Tell me all you can about the murder itself."

The minister then related the events at Charing Cross so far as he knew them.

"It's an interesting case," said Nick, at the end, "and I am glad this matter happened before I got out of the country. I will go to work at once, and you will hear from me when I have anything to say."

The minister saw from this that he was no longer needed.

He thanked Nick and went back to his house.

As soon as he was gone, Nick turned to Chick.

"What do you think?" he asked.

"I can't understand," was the reply, "why Pallog's accomplice went back to the Old Bailey a second time."

"Neither can I," returned Nick, "and I'm not trying to find out."

"Indeed?"

"Why should I?"

"Do you mean that you don't believe the accomplice theory?"

"I do not. There are villains enough in the world who are not in prison; but I believe Pallog is the only white man who would have done that murder."

"And Pallog is in prison."

"Yes. So it must have been the black man."

"From Borneo?"

"Sure."

"And yet we have never come across that black man, and we have nothing better than Pallog's word that there is such a man."

"How?"

"We have something better than Pallog's word. He told us in New York that a black called on him at the Astor House. That may have been a lie, but we know that nothing would be more likely than that the savages of Borneo would try to get that wonderful diamond away from the man who took it out of their country."

"That's so."

"The savages thought so much of the stone that they would willingly send a man—a dozen men—around the world to get it. They are sometimes wonderfully shrewd—the savages, I mean."

"And you think one of them has managed to trace the stone to the Roumelian minister's house?"

"I do."

"He must speak English, then."

"Yes. If he didn't, he couldn't have learned that Blowitz was going by a train from Charing Cross. This has been a good day for crime, Chick. A criminal could work in the fog better than at night."

"That's just what he has done."

For a moment the two detectives were silent.

"The police are on the wrong track," said Nick, decidedly. "If Pallog had made his escape I might think of him, but perhaps not even then, for the murder was done with a dagger."

"I was thinking of that."

"The dagger is the natural weapon of a savage."

"Yes."

"A white man would have struck Blowitz senseless with the butt of a revolver."

"That's right."

"Then we've got to hunt the city for a black man from Borneo who speaks English."

CHAPTER V.

THE TICKET-TAKERS.

"That's a pretty large order," said Chick. "How are you going to begin?"

"By asking questions at the Mansion House station of the London, Chatham and Dover railroad."

Chick opened his eyes wide.

"That's more than two miles from Charing Cross!" he said.

"It is. Have you thought where the murderer would go after committing the crime?"

"We know that he went out of the car by the other window."

"No we don't."

"Oh! you think he opened that window to mislead the police, and went out the same way he got in?"

"I shouldn't wonder. He could do it as well as not in the fog, and it would be easier for his purpose."

"I don't catch on."

"The police thought he went to the footway because that was in the direction of the other door."

"Yes, for if he went out the way he came in he would be in the station where there were a lot of people."

"None of whom could be seen on account of the fog."

"True, and that means that he could not be seen."

"Certainly. Now, do you remember that there is direct railway connection between Charing Cross and the Mansion House?"

"I do."

"It is the only elevated road that London has. It crosses the river from Charing Cross, goes along over the house tops to a point opposite the Mansion

House, where it crosses the river again and comes to an end."

"I remember."

"They run trains over that road between Charing Cross and Mansion House every half-hour."

"And they leave on the hour!" cried Chick, beginning to see through his chief's theory.

"Except," said Nick, "when a through express is leaving at the same time. At two o'clock, for example, the train for Mansion House would wait three minutes after the express had left. Blowitz was on the two o'clock express. The murderer, having done his deed, which he did with great quickness, took Blowitz's bag, got out of the compartment, crossed a few tracks to another platform, and calmly went around to the Mansion House train."

"It seems likely."

"We must find out about it. He would go as far as he could on that train. Therefore he would go to Mansion House. Where he went from there remains to be seen."

"If he went there," said Chick. "All this is theory, so far."

"I admit that, but I believe in it so much that I am going to the Mansion House to ask questions."

"What shall I do?"

"You and Patsy go to Charing Cross. You may pick up things there that the Scotland Yard fellows have missed."

"I suppose you want us to follow your theory."

"Certainly."

"And ask questions about a black man."

"That's it. Even in the fog he may have been seen by somebody, and black men are so rare in London that he would be sure to attract attention."

They started from the hotel together.

Patsy met them at the door.

He had just returned from his trip to Trafalgar Square.

Nick told him to go with Chick, and the detectives separated.

It is necessary to explain to those who have not

traveled in England that they don't run railroads over there as they do in this country.

If they did, Nick would have had a hard time of it.

A conductor does not pass through a train, taking up tickets, as is the case here.

Such a plan would be impossible because the cars are divided into little rooms, or compartments, with partitions that run clear across.

At any station the conductor may come along, open the door of the passenger's room and demand his ticket, but as a rule, especially on short runs, no tickets are asked for until the passenger leaves the train.

He has to show his ticket at a gate before going to the train, as in large cities in this country.

Then he rides to his station, where he has to pass through another gate to get to the street.

At that gate a man stands, who takes the tickets.

If the passenger cannot show a ticket, he is arrested.

As he had been in England many times, Nick knew that the black man, if he went to the Mansion House, would have to go out by a gate, and so be seen by one of the ticket-takers there.

If none of these ticket-takers remembered a black man, the detective was ready to give up his theory and think out a new one.

He thought it best to tell the ticket-taker plainly what he was about.

So, when he got to the Mansion House, he said:

"I am a detective, and I am after a criminal who I believe passed through here about a quarter past two this afternoon. Were you on duty at that time?"

"I was, sir."

"Did you take the tickets for the train that came in from Charing Cross?"

"Some of them, sir."

"How many ticket-takers were there for that train?"

"Two."

"Is the other one here?"

"Yes, sir. That man over there, just starting for home. I'm going myself in a minute."

"Then I'll wait for you, and ask both of you together."

Nick went up to the other ticket-taker, made the same explanation, and asked him to wait.

Very soon he had both men together.

"Now," said Nick, "the fellow I am looking for is a black man."

At this the ticket-takers exchanged glances.

"Must be him!" exclaimed one.

"You saw such a man, then?" asked Nick, quietly.

It seemed as if his theory was being justified rapidly.

"Yes, we did," replied one of the ticket-takers.

"Was he a short man, with a long overcoat?"

"I shouldn't wonder."

"Very black? a regular nigger?"

"Quite likely."

"Does your man speak English well?"

"Like a native."

"Then it must be him!"

"I am glad you remember him so well," said Nick.

"How did you happen to take such a good look at him?"

"Why! We had trouble with him."

"Oh! What about?"

"He didn't have the right ticket."

"What ticket did he show you?"

"A ticket to Dover."

"From the Charing Cross station?"

"Yes."

"What did he say about it?"

"Nothing at first. He tried to pass out on it."

"And you stopped him?"

"Of course."

"What did you say?"

"I told him that it wouldn't go."

"What did he do then?"

"He took the ticket back, stepped away and got in the line of passengers going past the other ticket-taker. You see, he thought he could pass unnoticed in the crowd."

"I see. Well?"

"I sung out to the other ticket-taker to look out for a Dover ticket."

"And then?"

"The other ticket-taker stopped him."

"He might have got by," remarked the other ticket-taker, "if I hadn't been warned. There was quite a crowd passing at the time."

"What did he say to you?" asked Nick.

"Something about the wrong train."

"Did he pretend that he had made a mistake in getting on the train at Charing Cross?"

"He did, but that didn't go with us, for we knew the gateman there wouldn't have let him make a mistake."

"And, besides," put in the first man, "he showed that he was trying to cheat us by slipping from one ticket-taker to the other. We came near calling a policeman."

"But you didn't do so?"

"No. He seemed to understand all of a sudden, and he begged pardon so hard that we let him off."

"How?"

"Oh! we took his fare from Charing Cross in cash, three pence, you know."

"And I suppose he went away then."

"Yes."

"In what direction?"

"Couldn't say, sir. We didn't watch him. Leastwise, I didn't. Did you, Bill?"

"No," said Bill, "I don't know where he went."

"Thank you, gentlemen," said Nick; "one more question, please. Did this black man have a traveling bag?"

The ticket-takers thought about this for a moment.

"I didn't see any," replied one.

"No," said the other, "I'm sure he didn't have anything with him, for if he had he would have had to set it down when he hunted through his pockets for coppers to pay his fare."

This was all the information the ticket-takers could give him, and Nick left them.

He went to a telephone station and called up Scotland Yard, asking for an inspector there whom he knew well.

"Hello, Haley," he said, "this is Carter, of New York."

"What?" exclaimed the inspector, "Nick?"

"The same."

"I heard you were in town. Why don't you call on us?"

"I meant to this evening, but I'm busy now."

"I'm not surprised. Can we do anything for you?"

"Yes. What's the latest about the Charing Cross murder?"

"You're on that, are you?"

"Perhaps."

"Well, we've found Blowitz's traveling-bag."

"Where was it?"

"In the river near Waterloo bridge."

"Empty, I suppose."

"No; it was full of the old man's clothes."

"But it had been opened."

"Oh, yes; cut open."

"I see. Didn't stop to unlock it."

"No, and the murderer used the knife with which he had killed his man."

"How do you know that?"

"Blood stains along the cut."

"Have you found the knife?"

"Not yet. We've got divers hunting for it near the bridge."

"Which bridge?"

"Charing Cross, of course. The murderer must have gone that way and dropped the bag over after he had cut it open and hunted in it for the diamond Blowitz was supposed to carry. We presume that he also dropped his knife to the bottom of the river."

"I understand."

"If we can find the knife it will be a good clew, won't it?"

"First rate."

"I thought so. Can you give us a hint, Carter?"

"Certainly."

"We'd like to work with you, you know."

"That's all right. I certainly sha'n't work against you, but this is my hunt, Haley; you're on the wrong track."

"Go on!"

"I mean it. The murderer didn't cross the footway."

"Where did he go, then?"

"To Mansion House. I've just talked with two men who saw him."

"Well! you're a good one."

"I hope so. I'm going to follow up my clew now,

and if you don't want to waste time you can call your divers out of the river. They won't find the knife."

"I think you're mistaken for once, Carter."

"Guess not, but we'll see later. Good-by."

Haley said good-by, and rang off.

Nick went out to the street in front of the station, and for the next half-hour was busy asking questions of newsboys, fruit dealers, and others who had been near there at half-past two, whether they had seen a black man in a long overcoat.

The result of these inquiries was that Nick set out eastward, for he found persons who remembered seeing a black man going in that direction.

He asked no more questions.

"Time enough for that if I don't run across him to-night," he thought. "The nearer I get to him the more careful I must be not to let him get wind that anybody is on his track."

Nick soon found himself in Whitechapel, a district in London where everybody is poor and where there have been enough criminals to give the district a bad name.

The detective thought it likely that the murderer would hide himself somewhere in this district.

It is a good place for hiding.

There are more narrow, crooked and dark alleys than there are streets, and there are many dark courts between buildings.

For more than an hour Nick wandered around.

He saw a few blacks here and there, but none of them aroused his suspicions.

They were all Africans, or half-bloods, like the American negroes.

The natives of Borneo look very differently, and it was a native of Borneo that Nick wanted to see.

Presently he had one of the greatest surprises of his life.

He did not see a Borneo man. It was a white man, who made him halt and hold his breath.

This man had a full black beard, but that was nothing to Nick Carter.

The detective seemed to see through the beard; he saw the face as he had last seen it, in court that very morning.

He saw, too, the man's gait, he noticed his build, and the way he clinched his hands as he walked.

There might be two such men in the world.

"Is it possible," thought Nick, "that Jan Pallog has a double here in London?"

"Pallog was in prison at half-past five."

"What is he doing here?"

"Is my theory of this case all wrong?"

CHAPTER VI.

PALLOG'S LIFE IN DANGER.

Nick fell in behind the man he thought he recognized, and followed him until he went into a restaurant.

The man sat near the door, and with his back to it.

A waiter went up to him, and while he gave his order, Nick bought a cigar at the cashier's desk.

Thus he overheard the man's order, but not in the man's voice, for he spoke so low that the detective could not hear.

What he did hear was the waiter repeating the order to make sure that he had it right.

"Sirloin steak and French fry, sir? and coffee? Very good, sir, but you'll have to wait till the steak and potatoes are cooked."

The customer nodded, and the waiter went to the kitchen.

"It will take ten minutes for the steak," thought Nick, "and he's good for ten minutes more in eating it. But I don't dare to let him wholly out of sight. I wish I had heard his voice. That would have settled it."

The detective went out to the sidewalk.

Directly across the street was a cheap clothing store.

A few doors from it was a public telephone office.

Nick glanced back into the restaurant.

His man was still at the table.

He had picked up a newspaper, and from the way he held it Nick could see that he was reading the account of the Charing Cross murder.

"The first thing a criminal does when he takes up a paper," thought Nick, "is to read the story of his own crime."

"Can it be possible that Jan Pallog——"

He did not finish the question, but ran over to the telephone office and rang up the Tavistock Hotel.

He asked for one of his assistants, and a moment later he heard Patsy's voice.

"I've just come in, Nick," said Patsy; "Chick is still——"

"Never mind," Nick interrupted, "I want you to hustle down to the Old Bailey."

"All right. What for?"

"Find out whom they've got there under the name of Jan Pallog!"

"All right."

"Bring your information to the public house at 317 Whitechapel road. If you don't find me, notify Scotland Yard."

"All right. Say, Nick."

"Well! Speak fast."

"We found that a black man had been in Charging—"

"Oh! Hang the black man!"

"That's what we're trying to do."

"Drop him."

"Don't you care anything more about him?"

"Not much."

"You might like to know that he had on a long overcoat—"

"Forget it! Go down to Old Bailey and learn all you can about Pallog, or the man who is there under that name."

"I'm off. Good-by."

Nick hung up the receiver.

He noticed as he went out that the fog had cleared greatly.

As it was now, he could see his man in the restaurant.

He was still waiting for his steak and potatoes, and he was still reading a paper.

Nick hurried into the clothing store.

"Got a second-hand coster's suit?" he asked.

The dealer thought he had, and looked over his stock.

Presently he brought out one that Nick could get into, and a purchase was quickly made.

The detective had his own clothes packed and sent to the Tavistock Hotel.

While he was in the store he looked often across the street at the restaurant.

He could not see his man from there, but he could see everybody who went in or out of the doorway.

If the man he suspected as Pallog had come out, the detective would have followed him whether he had made his change of costume or not.

After the change had been made, Nick stepped into a dark alley and completely altered the appearance of his face.

Then he went back to the door of the restaurant.

The man was now eating.

Nick drew a long breath.

It wasn't often that he had to let a man out of his sight as long as that, and he was glad that this man had not sneaked out of the restaurant by a back door.

About twenty minutes had passed since he telephoned Patsy.

In half that time the young detective could get to the Old Bailey from the Tavistock, but, of course, there was no telling how long he might have to stay there.

Fifteen or twenty minutes more would be needed to get from the prison to this part of Whitechapel road.

The public house Nick had named was near by, and, although it was not yet time to expect Patsy, he looked often toward it.

Presently the man in the restaurant finished his meal and came out.

Nick stood at the curb when he passed.

The man did not seem to see him, although he looked all around before starting away.

When he did start he walked very slowly, and he looked into every alley he crossed.

After he had gone a little way, he turned around and went back to a point some distance beyond the restaurant.

There he halted, waited a bit, and then went in the other direction, passing the restaurant again.

He did this several times, and nothing could have been clearer than that he was looking for somebody.

Nick was interested and puzzled.

"I believe that beard is false," said Nick to himself, who was patiently following, "and I believe that man is Pallog."

"If it is, what is he doing in Whitechapel?"

"If he escaped from prison in time to commit that murder, as now seems likely, he knows that the diamond isn't anywhere near. He didn't find the stone on Blowitz, or in his bag."

"So, what is he prowling around Whitechapel for?"

The detective had to give it up.

It would have been an easy matter to make Pallog speak aloud. Nick could have stumbled against him. Then, if the voice was that of Pallog, the detective could have arrested him in a second.

But Nick was in no hurry to arrest the man.

He was having plenty of time to think, and his theory of the case was changing.

At last the man went into the bar of a public house.

It was not the place where Nick had told Patsy to come.

Nick also went into the bar, but not into that part of it where his man went.

English bars, like their railway cars, are generally divided into little compartments.

The largest of these is called the "public" bar, and the others, "private" bar, "sitting-room" and so forth.

Nick's man went into the public bar, and the detective stepped into the one nearest to it.

The door between was open.

The detective, being in a "private" bar, was served first.

He called for ale, and a moment later he heard the voice he knew asking for brandy.

"I was not mistaken," he said to himself. "It's Pallog!"

There were several customers in the public bar.

They were having a lively discussion, and the subject of it was the Charing Cross murder.

That was natural, for probably all London was talking of it that evening.

The men's voices were loud and rather angry.

Evidently they had been disputing for some time.

"I tell 'ee," cried one, harshly, "it must 'a' been a sailor chap. No hordinary man could 'a' clumb through a winder like that."

"'Ear 'im talk!" sneered another; "now, we knows all about it."

"Well, who done it if not a sailor chap?"

"'Ow do I know? I wasn't there."

"Nobody said you was."

"Better not, then."

"Aw," growled another voice, "I don't think no man done it, I don't."

"Wot were it, then?"

"A hape, that's wot 'twas."

"A hape? Wot's that, Jerry?"

"Why! a hape. I've seen lots of 'em at the zoo. Big monkeys, d'ye mind? A hape is a big monkey."

There was loud laughter at this.

The man who thought that the criminal was an ape became very angry.

"Come off, now, you bloomin' fools," he shouted.

"There ain't nothink silly in that. I've read somewhere about a hape that did a murder, an' it queered all the p'lice in the city to find hout about it."

"Come off yerself, Jerry. That was a make-up story."

"No, 'twant. I read it."

"But hit never 'appened. Some o' these hauthor chaps just writ it to fool such as you."

"Don't call me a fool!"

"I didn't, but don't you try to make us believe that a hape ever did a murder. Pooh!"

"Don't 'ave no row, gents," said the bartender.

They paid no attention to this.

"I'll leave it hanybody wot's read a book!" cried Jerry.

He turned to Pallog, who just finishing his brandy, and asked:

"You, sir, didn't you hever read about a hape doin' murder?"

"Yes," answered Pallog, shortly.

"There now!"

"But I didn't say an ape did this one," added Pallog.

"'Twas a sailor chap, eh, mister?"

"What the devil do you suppose I know about it?"

Pallog spoke fiercely.

The other men had been getting angry, but they knew and understood each other.

This stranger spoke in a way that turned them all against him.

At first they were silent.

Pallog set down his glass, threw a coin on the bar, and added:

"You're a pack of idiots to talk about a thing you don't know anything about."

With this, he started to leave the bar.

They got in his way.

Several talked at once.

Nick could not make out their words, they spoke so quickly.

He slipped into the room with them.

Pallog was warding off a blow aimed at him, and was trying to get to the door.

Two or three were in front of him, and just behind was a man who had raised a beer mallet to strike him.

This man evidently was a cab driver.

He was the one who had the ape theory.

"'Ang 'ee," cried Jerry, with the mallet raised, "I'll teach 'ee to call us hidiots!"

Jerry was just drunk enough to be ugly.

If his mallet had struck his victim that would have been the last of Pallog.

Nick, in his disguise as a coster, dashed forward.

He caught Jerry by the arm, and tore the mallet from his grasp.

"'Ere there, fair play!" cried the coster. "Don't 'it a man for speakin' 'is mind!"

It was not till then that Pallog knew that such a deadly blow had been aimed at him.

He ducked and darted toward the door.

A rough-looking fellow struck him on the side of the head, and sent him spinning to a corner.

Jerry, the cabman, and two others, closed with Nick.

In about two seconds they wished they hadn't.

He dropped the mallet and struck out with both fists.

Each caught a man on the jaw and sent him to the floor.

Nick then caught the third by the collar and waistband, lifted him from the floor, and swung him up into the air.

For half-a-second he held him there.

Then he threw him at the group of half-a-dozen or so who were thinking of joining in the fight.

The flying body of their comrade struck three of them at once.

One caught a boot heel in the eye.

Another had his wind knocked out of him.

The third lost a tooth because the flying man's elbow hit him in the mouth.

The others stumbled out of the way.

Most of the men in the bar made for the sidewalk.

Those who staid slunk into corners.

"Fair play, says I, an' free speech," Nick remarked cheerfully, as he picked up the mallet and placed it on the bar.

The landlord ran in.

"Get out of 'ere, hevery one of you!" he yelled. "I won't 'ave my 'ouse turned hinto a prize ring. Get out."

They were all moving out, Nick and Pallog included.

The landlord seemed to think Nick wasn't going fast enough.

"Move lively, now!" he cried, giving the detective a shove.

Nick turned on him.

He saw that it was necessary to play his part thoroughly.

So he picked the landlord up, raised him level with the bar, and dropped him over behind it.

"Yqu stay where you belong," he said.

The landlord tumbled down among bottles and glasses, with a great crash.

A second later he looked cautiously over the top of the bar.

Nick and Pallog were just going out.

All the rest had got out earlier.

"Blow me!" gasped the landlord, "hif that coster ain't a rum 'un!"

CHAPTER VII.

THE HILT OF A DAGGER.

The men who had been in the bar were crowded together on the sidewalk.

Pallog got close to Nick.

"That's right, mister," said the detective, "better keep your heyes open for a bit."

There was no need of this advice.

Pallog seemed to be thoroughly frightened.

"I didn't want a row with them," he muttered. "I didn't think what I was saying."

"Never mind," returned Nick, "I'll stand by ye, if ye like, till you get to your house. Is it near?"

"No, I don't live in this part of town."

"Ah! just lookin' through Whitechapel to see wot it's like, sir?"

"Yes, that's it; just to pass time."

Jerry and his friends were muttering and glancing angrily at the detective and Pallog.

"Do you suppose they'll follow us?" asked Pallog, with a backward glance.

"Mebbe, sir; like enough," responded Nick. "But I'm good for 'em hif they do."

"Yes, you are. You are a very strong man."

"I was brought up fighting."

A crowd had begun to gather about Jerry and the others.

The row had taken place so quickly that nobody on the street heard it, but Jerry was telling of it angrily.

Somebody took a potato from a coster's cart and threw it at Nick and Pallog.

It missed, but Pallog was made more nervous.

"If we get into a general row," he said, "it will be too much even for you."

"Right you are," responded Nick. "We'll dodge 'em."

He took Pallog by the arm and turned him into an alley.

Nick, who really did wish to get away so that he could have Pallog to himself, hurried.

A shower of stones, sticks and vegetables fell behind them, as they made their first turn.

They dodged about in the alleys for several minutes, gradually losing sound of their pursuers, until at last they were out on Whitechapel road again.

"They'll lay for us again if they see us," said Pallog.

"We might step into a pub till they forget us," responded Nick.

"We'll do that, and I'll stand treat."

"I'll have to go you."

No. 317 was near, and Nick led the way there.

He no longer needed Patsy's information, but he hoped to find the young detective, for Patsy might be very useful a little later.

There was no sign of Patsy in the pub.

"I don't believe he's been here," thought Nick. "If he had, he would have found some way to let me know."

Pallog set up the drinks, and Nick stayed in the bar with him for half-an-hour.

The man was in his power, and yet Nick did not arrest him.

He had been doing too much thinking for that.

The fact was that Nick had returned to the black man theory that he had given up as soon as he learned that Pallog was out of prison.

As he thought it over, remembering what the minister had told him about the call of Pallog's friend at Old Bailey, he saw clearly that the scoundrel had made his escape in time to be at Charing Cross long before the arrival of Blowitz.

Pallog, therefore, could have committed the murder.

Nick did not believe that he had.

He had begun to believe that he knew what the man was hanging around Whitechapel for.

"I'll stay with him till I find out," was Nick's decision.

It was not long before Nick saw that Pallog was trying to get rid of him.

Nick immediately began to talk about the Charing Cross murder.

"That was a awful thing in the railroad train," said he.

Pallog gave a short grunt, which might have meant yes.

"Wot do you think of it, sir?" asked Nick.

"I don't think anything," replied Pallog. "I've got into trouble once shooting off my mouth about it, and I won't make the same mistake twice."

"But you an' me won't 'ave no trouble. We're friends. Now, between you an' me, wasn't the murderer a mighty clever chap?"

"He must have been to fool the police as he has."

"That's just it, sir. He's got the police silly. I don't think they'll never catch 'im."

"Why not?"

"'Cause he's got so fur away. He's got out of the city long afore this."

"Yes, maybe," said Pallog, uneasily.

"Just you see, sir," Nick went on, confidentially, "the feller did the thing in a moving train. Wot was to prevent 'im in the fog from gettin' on another train?"

He paused, but Pallog did not answer.

"Wot was to prevent 'im? says I," Nick added.

"What?" asked Pallog, "were you talking to me? Have another drink. I shall have to be going pretty soon."

"Thankee, don't care if I do. 'E could 'a' taken the train fer the Mansion House——"

"I won't talk about it," interrupted Pallog, crossly. "I'm not interested. Here's how."

He raised his glass, and Nick did likewise.

Pallog took but a sip of his liquor, and then cautiously emptied the glass into a spittoon.

"He's trying to get me drunk," thought Nick, with a silent chuckle.

The detective had taken nothing but ale, and he set his glass down after a taste.

"I won't say another word," he said. "You an' me are friends, ain't we?"

He slapped Pallog on the shoulder.

"Yes," returned Pallog, with a sly glance at the

detective, "and I'm obliged for what you did for me. Good-night."

"Goin' now?"

Pallog had started for the door.

"Yes; it's getting late. Good-night."

"I'll go—hic—with you a little way. Hic! those blokes may be layin' fer you."

Nick staggered a little as he crossed the barroom.

Pallog's eyes sparkled.

He seemed to think that, at last, he should be able to shake the good-natured coster.

"I guess there isn't any danger now," he responded.

"I'll fix 'em," Nick boasted. "Hic! let 'em come on if they want anything of me."

He took Pallog by the arm.

Pallog tried to draw away, but the detective wouldn't let him go.

"United we stan', as the Yankees say—hic!" babbled Nick, "an' divided we fall. Come on. You're a good feller, an' so'm I."

"Yes," exclaimed Pallog, "but you don't need to hang onto me like that."

"Yesh I do—hic! I don't want to fall."

For some little distance they went straggling along the Whitechapel road.

Loafers on the street laughed at them, and Pallog got more and more uneasy.

He kept looking around, never failing to glance into the alleys they passed.

Nick observed this.

"Still hunting for somebody," he thought.

Suddenly Pallog made a quick movement.

The detective was equally quick, but he did not try to keep hold of his man any longer.

His judgment told him that it was time to let go.

Accordingly he allowed Pallog to shake him off.

"'Ere!—hic!" stammered Nick, staggering to the curb; "let's 'ave one more drink—eh?"

Pallog had darted into an alley.

Nick's eyes were open, and he saw a shadowy form further up the alley just passing under a lamppost.

One dim glimpse was enough.

The form was that of a black man!

There was a long overcoat, a face that was unlike an African's, and then the form disappeared.

Probably it went into a doorway.

Nick saw Pallog pass under the same lamppost and disappear also.

"Now, I know I'm right!" thought the detective. "Pallog also was looking for the black man, and saw him first!"

Nick stepped into the alley, keeping close to a building so as to conceal himself in its shadow.

A few paces from the street there was a pile of empty boxes.

They were at the back door of a dry goods store.

The detective knelt beside the boxes, with his eyes fixed on the spot where Pallog and the black man had disappeared.

After a moment he could see a doorway just beyond the lamppost.

Somebody was standing in it.

Nick knew that it must be Pallog.

Probably he was looking back to see whether the coster had followed him.

That this was the case was proved a little later.

The man in the doorway was Pallog, and, not satisfied with looking, he stepped into the alley and went slowly toward the street.

Nick quietly crawled into an empty box and curled up.

He heard Pallog come to the boxes, look behind them and pass on to the entrance of the alley.

Peeping out then, Nick saw him stand at the entrance a moment and look in both directions along the street.

After that, he retraced his steps and went in at the doorway where he had been standing.

Then Nick crawled out of his hiding place, and went to the doorway also.

It was dark in there, but he heard steps on the next landing above.

Nick softly climbed the stairs.

As he got to the top step he heard the clicking of a latch.

It did not sound as if a door was being opened.

"I know what that means," thought Nick; "Pallog is picking a lock."

It was impossible to see a thing.

The detective could have leaped toward the sound.

He could have risked a revolver shot in the darkness.

But it was not fear that held him back.

Nick believed that Pallog, like himself, was after the black man from Borneo.

"One villain will uncover the other," thought Nick. "if I let them alone."

So he stood still until the clicking of the lock ceased.

Then he heard the sound of a door softly opened and shut.

Next instant there was a racket in the room beyond.

It was then time to act, and Nick darted along the passage toward the sounds.

Chairs and tables seemed to be upsetting.

He heard Pallog's voice.

It was speaking in a language that even Nick Carter did not understand.

There was another voice, deep and thick.

Both were speaking together.

Evidently Pallog and another man were engaged in a furious struggle.

The other must be the black whom Nick believed to be the murderer of Blowitz.

"What luck to get them both at one stroke!" thought Nick.

He was feeling his way along the wall for a door.

Having found it, he tried the handle.

It turned, but the door was locked.

As proved by a later investigation, it was a spring lock.

Pallog had picked it, and then, when he closed the door behind him, the lock had fastened again.

Sounds within the room showed that the fight had got to the further side.

There was no time for picking the lock again.

Nick put his shoulder to the door and pushed.

The woodwork creaked and strained.

He drew back a bit and lunged with all his force.

With a smash and crash the door gave way, and let the detective into the room.

The racket was then louder than ever.

But just as Nick entered there was the noise of a door slammed somewhere in front of him.

Then the sound of the struggle was less loud.

There were other sounds, however.

Hurrying feet could be heard in other parts of the building.

Tenants were running about trying to find out what was the matter.

Meantime the two men he was after had fought their way into an adjoining room.

Nick made for the place where he had heard the door slam.

He stumbled upon an overturned chair, and fell to his hands and knees.

In this he lost a second.

No more than that, however, for he was up again and in another instant was trying to open a door.

This, too, was locked.

Again the detective threw himself against the barrier.

As before, the door broke at the first lunge.

Nick was in the second room, which seemed, if possible, to be darker than the first.

Just as he stepped in he heard a groan, and the sound of a falling body.

The noise of hurrying steps was greater.

They were in every direction.

But the sound of struggling had ceased abruptly.

It was not till then that Nick had time to get at his pocket-lantern.

This and one or two other tools of his profession he had taken with him from the hotel, and he had put them in the pockets of his coster suit.

He halted for no more than half-a-second.

Then the bright rays of the lantern flashed upon the scene.

He saw a plainly furnished room.

At the further end was a partly-open door.

Near it on the floor was the body of a man, face upward.

It was Pallog.

His lips were parted and his eyes staring.

One knee was raised.

The other leg was doubled under him.

His hands were at his breast.

They evidently had been brought there in an effort to tear away a dagger.

The hilt of the weapon showed plainly almost within reach of his fingers.

It seemed to have been driven with great force clear through his heart.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BLACK MAN.

Nick gave but one glance at Pallog.

He leaped for the open door.

The black man must have gone out that way.

"One villain has done for the other, so that I can't take them both alive," was in the detective's

thoughts, "but there's only one left, and that one I've got to have!"

As he was about to pass through the doorway, a negro confronted him.

He was half-dressed, and his eyes were bulging with surprise and anger.

The light of Nick's lantern showed that he was an ordinary African, not the man he was after.

"What you doin' here?" demanded the negro.

He placed himself in Nick's way.

There was a razor in his hand.

"Stand back!" cried Nick, sternly, drawing his revolver.

The negro darted back a pace or two, but his eyes glowed fiercely, and he repeated his question.

"What you doin' here?"

"I am an officer," replied Nick, quickly. "You mustn't interfere with me."

He hoped that this statement would satisfy the negro, for he wanted no trouble with the tenants.

He could understand their feelings, and he knew that they would suppose that he was only a drunken coster on a rampage.

It proved that the word "officer" had no terror for them.

On the contrary, it made them more angry.

Other dark faces confronted Nick.

He was making his way rapidly across the room to another door.

"I sha'n't harm you," he said as he crossed. "The man I am after went out here. You'd better help me instead of standing in the way."

"You've got no right in a respectable house!" cried one of the negroes in front of him.

"Out of the way!" was the detective's response.

He rushed straight at the doorway.

Those who were there drew back a little, but just before he came to the door somebody whom he had not seen leaped upon him from behind.

Nick threw back an arm.

He knew that the negro's weapon, a razor, would be used against him.

He felt a prick on his shoulder, and then the cold steel of the razor's back sliding along his neck.

That blow had been warded off, but the cowardly attempt gave the others courage.

They rushed upon the detective, striking at him and slashing right and left with their razors.

Nick shut off the light.

It gave them an advantage over him, as they could see where to strike.

In the dark he counted on their slashing each other.

It would have been comparatively easy to shoot three or four of them and so clear a way.

But that was the last thing Nick wanted to do.

He understood what they felt.

They might be the worst criminals in London for all he knew, but they had nothing to do with the crime he was working on.

Naturally, they would be angry at finding a coster tearing around in the house late at night.

He felt that it would be nothing less than murder to shoot any of these men unless he was actually compelled to use his revolver to save himself.

It must be understood, too, that all was happening with lightninglike rapidity.

It was now but a few seconds since he had seen Pallog's body with the dagger sticking into it.

Having doused the light, Nick stepped back a pace.

At the same time he wheeled about, grasped in the dark at the man whose razor he had felt, and threw him heavily to the floor.

Then he used his fists.

He did not need to see his foes.

It was only necessary to strike out in the darkness to hit somebody.

Crack! smash! went the detective's hard fists.

Now, they landed on a nose, now on a jaw, now a gasp showed that he had knocked out somebody's wind with a blow on the chest.

Attempts to grapple with him were shaken off, and by skillful dodging he slipped between the negroes, so that in a moment they were grappling with each other.

Every one of them seemed to suppose that he was fighting with the coster.

They were yelling and cursing, and steps on the stairs indicated that the racket had aroused people in other buildings, who were now coming in to join in the fray.

"I'll have all Whitechapel against me at this rate," thought Nick.

But he had cleared the way in front of him.

The negroes were clashing at each other in the room when Nick slipped through the door into the hallway.

Men were crowding up the stairs.

He could not see, but he could hear them.

At his left he saw a glimmer of light.

It came from a lamp in a building across a court, and it showed therefore that there was a window near.

The detective leaped toward it.

The window was open, raised from the bottom.

"My man went out this way, sure!" thought Nick.

Without an instant's hesitation he crawled out.

There was just light enough outside for him to see that the roof of a shed was below him.

He dropped to it, ran to the edge and dropped again, this time landing on the ground.

At first he seemed to be in a pocket between buildings from which there was no way out.

He knew, however, that there must be an alley somewhere, and he ran around the sides of the court looking for it.

Not wishing to be delayed again by the resistance of tenants, he did not use his lantern.

The light would surely have attracted attention to him.

So he felt along the walls of the houses until he came to an opening.

It was a narrow passage, crooked and perfectly dark, that led through the buildings, not between them.

Nick entered it.

As he did so he heard light, hurrying steps ahead.

With his weapon ready for instant use now, he ran softly on, turning a corner sharply and seeing in front of him the alley into which Pallog had run from Whitechapel road.

The one street lamp burning there enabled him to see the door through which he and Pallog had gone into the building.

Beyond it was dark until he had come under the lamp itself.

Then the glow of light on the street revealed the pile of boxes where he had hidden from Pallog.

It also revealed just a glimpse of a form ducking behind the boxes.

The detective approached the pile stealthily.

When he had come to the spot where he had seen the figure duck, he leaped.

He knew his ground now.

This was exactly the spot where he had hidden.

He knew there was only one box there big enough for a man to get into.

Nick bent and reached into that box.

A man was there, and the detective dragged him out.

"Let me alone!" cried a thick voice.

The man began to struggle.

In a flash Nick had bracelets on his wrists.

"Behave yourself," said Nick, quietly.

The man gasped as he saw that his hands were caught.

He twisted the steel chain a moment, as if he thought he might be able to break it.

Then he drew a long breath and gave it up.

"All right," he said, "I'm done for."

Nick took him by the arm and marched him out to the street.

There, as luck would have it, he saw Patsy talking with two policemen.

The young detective had just come to Whitechapel from the Old Bailey.

"Here we are, Patsy," said Nick. "This is the murderer of Blowitz."

"That's right," said the prisoner, in a strangely sad tone, "I did it, and it was all for nothing. He didn't have the stone with him."

"And so Pallog didn't take it from you," said Nick.

"No. I thought he was in prison or I should have been more careful. He must have guessed how I took the train from Charing Cross to the Mansion House, and he must have known that I would be likely to have a room in a building where other black men live. I suppose that is how he came to be hunting for me here."

"Partly that," said Nick. "I saw that he was looking for you. I believed that he had come to the same theory about the murder that I did. He thought you had succeeded in getting the diamond, and he was after you in the hope that he could take it from you."

"Yes, that was it, but he didn't get it, for Blowitz didn't have the stone with him."

They were standing at the curb during this, the policemen listening with great interest.

A crowd was gathering.

"Better take him to the station, officers," said Nick, "and have some men come with me to remove

the dead body of the other man. I'll show you where it is."

While Nick was speaking the black man had brought his handcuffed hands to his vest pocket.

He was fumbling with his fingers in one of the pockets.

Suddenly he raised his hand to his mouth.

Nick reached for him swiftly and drew his hand away, but it was too late.

The black had put something into his mouth, which he swallowed hastily.

"You can take me now," he cried, with a wild laugh.

Then he began to reel.

The policeman held him for a moment, but he writhed so that they had to let him down.

He lay quivering on the sidewalk, and he said something in his own language that no one understood.

Then there was a frightful gasp, a last shudder of his body, and he became rigid.

"Well," said Nick, gravely, "he has beaten the hangman, that's all. Let's get done with the job by placing a guard over Pallog's body."

The crowd had attracted other policemen to the spot.

Two were left as a guard for the black man, and the others went with Nick and Patsy back to the building where the detective had had his struggle with the negroes.

By that time the place was lighted, and the row had stopped, but the tenants and many others were standing about, talking excitedly.

So many of them had been hurt by their scrapping with each other that there was no fight left in them.

So they made no trouble when the officers and detectives entered the building.

Nick led them through the broken doors to the room where Pallog lay——

That is, where Pallog had lain, for Nick stopped short in amazement.

The room was empty.

There was no dead body on the floor.

"I can't be mistaken," said Nick; "this was the place."

He looked into the other rooms and the hallway. No dead man.

They asked the tenants, who crowded around.

Every one of them declared, and with apparent truth, that he had seen no dead body.

Nick then went back to the room where he had seen Pallog lying.

There was a cheap carpet on the floor.

In one corner something seemed to be the matter with it.

The detective stooped there, and pulled up the edge of the carpet.

He drew forth a broken dagger.

The blade had snapped just below the hilt.

"Now, it's clear," said Nick. "Pallog wasn't dead, he wasn't even scratched. He must have suspected that I was coming. At any rate, he must have heard me breaking in the door. Then, finding that he could not overpower the black, he dropped and put the hilt of the dagger against his heart, pretending death.

"He tricked me well, for he must have known that I would go on after the black. He probably dropped from a window into the alley while I was having trouble with the tenants."

Nick gave the broken dagger to the policeman, and went back to the Tavistock with Patsy.

On the way Patsy told him about matters at the Old Bailey.

Pallog's brother had insisted that he was the man who ought to be there, until Patsy bluffed him by saying that Jan had been caught. Then Paul broke down and confessed. That had taken a long time, which accounted for Patsy's getting to Whitechapel so late.

"Well," said Nick, "I have one satisfaction in this interesting case. My theory of the murder was correct. But we don't go home yet. There's work for us in England as long as Jan Pallog is free.

"There's no telling what he'll do next, but he'll fight for that diamond as long as he has life to fight with.

"We must try to put him where he belongs before he has a chance to do any more damage.

"That's our next job, Patsy."

THE END.

Next week's issue, No. 269, will contain Nick Carter's Advertisement; or, A New Way to Catch a Criminal. Jan Pallog was finally brought to justice, but the Carters had many exciting adventures before they finally got the best of him.

FUN FOR EVERYBODY!

One week more, boys, and you will know the names of the winners in this contest. Next week their names will be announced. Look out for next week's issue. You may find your name in it as a prize winner. We have a lot of corking funny stories we haven't had room to print yet. They have all been entered in the contest, and you will find a few of them below. In the meantime, get to work on the new contest. If you don't know all about it, turn to page 31. Send in your stories for it as fast as you please. We are all ready for them.

Burdock's Goat.

(By William Robb, Pa.)

Last Monday afternoon the eleven Boblink boys surrounded and caught an enormous, shaggy goat, turned him loose in Burdock's garden, nailed up the gate, and then went home and flattened their eleven little noses against the back windows to watch for coming events.

Before his goatship had spent three minutes in the garden, he had managed to make himself perfectly at home, pulled down the clothes line and devoured two lace collars, a pair of under sleeves and a striped stocking belonging to Mrs. Burdock, and was busily engaged sampling one of Burdock's shirts, when the servant girl came rushing out with a basket of clothes to hang up.

"The saints preserve us!" she exclaimed, coming to a dead halt and gazing open-mouthed at the goat, who was calmly munching away at the shirt.

"Shew, shew, shew!" screamed the girl, setting down the basket, taking her skirts in both hands, and shaking them violently toward the intruder.

Then the goat, who evidently considered her movements in the light of a challenge, suddenly dropped his wicked old head and darted at her with the force of an Erie locomotive, and just one minute later by the city hall clock that girl had tumbled a back somersault over the clothes basket, and was crawling away on her hands and knees in search of a place to die.

The goat followed, butting her unmercifully every third second. It is likely that he would have kept on butting her for the next two weeks if Mrs. Burdock, who had been a witness of the unfortunate affair, had not armed herself with the family poker and hurried to the rescue.

"Merciful goodness, Anne! do get up on your feet!" she exclaimed, aiming a blow at the beast's head and missing it by a few of the shortest kind of inches. It was not repeated, owing to the goat suddenly rising up on his hind feet, waltzing toward her and striking her in the small of the back hard enough to loosen her finger nails and destroy her faith in the blessed immortality.

When Mrs. Burdock returned to her consciousness she crawled out from behind the grindstone where she had been tossed, and made for the house, stopping only once, when the goat came after, and butted her head first into the grape arbor.

Once inside the house, the door was locked, and the unfortunates sought the solitude of their own rooms, and such comfort as they could extract from rubbing and growling; while the goat wandered around the garden

like Satan in the book of Job, seeking what he might devour.

Meanwhile, the eleven little Boblink boys fairly hugged themselves with pleasure over the performance.

By the time Burdock returned home that evening and learned all the particulars from his arnica-soaked wife, the goat had eaten nearly all the week's washing, half the grape vine, and one side out of the clothes basket.

"Why in thunder didn't you put him out and not leave him there to destroy everything?" he demanded, angrily.

"Because he wouldn't go and I was not going to stay there to be killed, that's why," answered his wife, excitedly.

"Wouldn't fiddlesticks!" he exclaimed, making for the garden, followed by the entire family.

"Get out of here, you thief!" he exclaimed, as he came into the garden, and caught sight of the shaggy visitor.

The goat bit off another mouthful of the basket and regarded him with a mischievous twinkle of his eye.

"You won't go, hey?" exclaimed Burdock, trying to kick a hole in the enemy's ribs. "I'll show you wheth——"

The sentence was left unfinished, as the goat just then dropped his head on Burdock's shirt bosom.

Before Burdock could recover his equilibrium, he had been butted seven times in seven fresh spots, and was down on his knees, and crawling around in a very undignified manner, to the horror of the family and the infinite glee of eleven young Boblinks next door.

"Look out he don't hurt you!" screamed Mrs. Burdock, as the goat sent him flying into a sand pile. When Burdock had got his bald head out of the sand he was mud all over his clothes, and tried to catch the brute by the horns, but desisted after he had lost two front teeth and been rolled in the mud.

"Don't make a living show of yourself before the neighbors!" advised his wife.

"Golly, dad, look out! he is comin' again!" shouted his son, enthusiastically.

Mr. Burdock waxed profane, and swore three-story oaths in such rapid succession that his family held their breaths and a pious old lady who lived in a house in the rear, shut up her windows and sent out the cook for a policeman or a missionary.

"Run for it, dad!" advised his son a moment later, when the goat's attention seemed to be turned away.

Burdock sprang to his feet, and followed his off-

spring's suggestion. He was legging it in superb style, and the chances of his reaching the house seemed excellent, when the brute suddenly clapped on more steam, gained rapidly, and darting between his legs, capsized him into the ash box.

His family dragged him inside, another candidate for rubbing with arnica and a blessed haven of rest.

The back of the house has been hermetically sealed, and Burdock now proposes extending an invitation to the militia regiments of Boston to come and practice marksmanship off the roof, promising to furnish a live goat for a target, and a silver napkin ring as the first prize.

A Lobster Dream.

(By Bertie Green, N. Y.)

I dreamed I was boss of a lobster factory. I had eight lobsters working for me eight days a week, eight weeks a month, and eight months a year. After these eight lobsters worked for me eight years they got sassy and struck for eight dollars a minute for eight minute's work from eight o'clock till eight minutes after eight. I got angry at those eight lobsters, and drew my eight shooter and shot the eight lobsters with eight bullets.

Then I made eight graves eight feet deep to bury eight lobsters. The alarm rang, I awoke and remembered I ate lobsters.

A Lumberman's Chicken Story.

(By Will Thompson, Ind.)

A veteran lumberman told this story:

"I was the commissary of subsistence in a large lumber camp up Northwest and drove a hundred miles to get a change of fare. I returned with two crates of chickens.

"Grain being out of the question, they were fed on cornmeal made into a dough. This proved to be rather expensive, so our commissary mixed sawdust with it in the over-proportion of three parts of cornmeal to one part of sawdust. The chickens ate as usual, and the hens began to lay.

"By and by the meal grew scarce, and the sawdust was increased until the food became three parts of sawdust to one part of meal.

"One of the older hens manifesting a desire to brood, twelve eggs were assigned to her, and at the end of twenty-one days what do you suppose she hatched?

"Eleven woodpeckers and a chicken with a wooden leg!"

A Disturbance in a Church.

(By Arthur Welsh, Pa.)

We have had more trouble at our Methodist meeting-house! Last Sunday Reverend Mr. Moody was just beginning his sermon, and had uttered the words, "Brethren, I wish to direct your attention this morning to the fourth verse of the twentieth chapter of St. ——" when a hen emerged from a recess beneath the pulpit. As she had just laid an egg, she interrupted Mr. Moody to announce the fact to the congregation, and he stopped short as she walked out into the aisle, screeching, "Kuh-kuk-kuk-kuk-te-ke! Kuk-kuk-kuk-kuk-te-to!"

Mr. Moody contemplated her for a moment, and then concluded to go on; but the sound of his voice seemed to provoke her to rivalry, and she put on a pressure of five or six pounds to the square inch, and made such a racket that the preacher stopped again and said:

"Will Deacon Grimes please remove that disgraceful chicken from the meeting-house?"

The deacon rose, and proceeded with the task. He first tried to drive her toward the door, but she dodged him and still clucking vigorously, got under the seat in the front pew. Then the deacon seized his umbrella and scooped her out in the aisle again, after which he tried to "shoo" her toward the door, but she darted into a pew and hopped over the partition, came down in the opposite pew, and out into the side aisle, making a noise like a steam planing mill.

The deacon did not like to climb over after her, so he went around and just as he got in the side aisle, the hen flew over into the middle aisle again. Then the boys in the gallery laughed, and the deacon began to get red in the face.

At last Mr. Binns came out of his pew to help, and as both he and the deacon made a dash at the chicken from opposite directions, she flew up with a wild cluck to the gallery, and perched on the edge, while she gave excited expressions to her views by emitting five hundred clucks a minute. The deacon flung a hymn book at her to scare her down again, but he missed, and hit Billy Jones, a Sunday-school scholar, in the eye. Then another boy in the gallery made a dash at her, and reached so far over that he tumbled and fell on Mrs. Miskey's bonnet, whereupon she said aloud that he was predestined for the gallows. The crash scared the hen, and she flew over and roosted on the stove pipe that ran along just under the ceiling.

In order to bring her down the deacon and Mr. Binns both beat on the lower part of the pipe with their umbrellas, and at the fifth or sixth knock the pipe separated and about forty feet of it came down with a crash, emptying a barrel or two of soot over the congregation.

There were women in that congregation who went home looking as if they had been working in a coal mine, and wishing they could stab Deacon Grimes without being hanged for murder.

The hen came down with the stove pipe, and as she flew by Mr. Binns he made a dash at her with his umbrella, and knocked her clear through a \$15 pane of glass, whereupon she landed in the street, and hopped off clucking insanely. Then Mr. Moody adjourned the congregation. They are going to expel the owner of that hen from the church when they discover his identity.

Editorial Wit.

(By Frank Hall, Mass.)

In the autumn of '18— my friend the editor of the *Baldwinsville Bugle*, was obliged to go and dig his 'taters, and he axed me to editor for him doorin' his absence.

Accordingly I ground up his shears and commenced. It didn't take me a great while to slash out copy enuff from the exchange for one isso, and I thawt I'd ride up to the next town, a little jaunt to rest my branes, which

had bin severely rackt by my mental efforts. (This is sorter ironical.)

So I went over to the ralroad offiss and axed the sooperintendent for a pars.

"You a editor?" he axed, evidently on the pint of snickerin'.

"Yes, sir," sez I. "Don't I look poor enuff?"

"Just about," sed he, "but our road can't pars you."

"Can't, hay?"

"No, sir—it can't."

"Becauz," sez I, looking him full in the face with a eagle eye, "it goes so darned slow it can't pars anybody!" Methinks I had him thar. "It's the slowest raleroad in the West."

With a mortified air, he told me to git out of his pfiss. I pittied him and went out.

Of More Importance.

(By Wm. L. Stewart, N. B.)

A certain phsyician had blunderingly mismanaged a case to which he had been called in consultation. The indignant family seized him and tied him up, but in the night he managed to free himself and escaped by swimming across a river which cut off pursuit.

When he reached home he found his son, who had just begun to study medicine, poring over his books. He wrung out his wet clothes, and turning to the student, said, gravely:

"My son, don't be in a hurry with your books; the first and most important thing is to learn to swim."

Buying and Selling.

(By Charles Jenkins, N. J.)

"You advertised," said the gullible one, "that you had discovered the key to success."

"True," admitted the fakir.

"Well, it don't help me a little bit."

"The reason for that," answered the fakir, pleasantly, "is that you have been buying the key instead of selling it. It has brought me success."

A Reformer Repulsed.

(By Raymond Thompson, Concord, N. H.)

A man was walking in an alley one day when he saw an Irishman vigorously beating his wife. Being a strong man, he stopped the fight, and said to the Irishman, who had recently come over.

"Why do you beat your wife? In America we never do that."

The Irishman looked at him quizzically for a few moments and then said, "Begorra, sir, then it's becose your wife beats you." The man retired.

The Deacon and the Book.

(By W. T. Jones, Washington, D. C.)

A funny joke, and all the more palatable as its truth can be vouched for, occurred at a prominent church in New Jersey. It seems that a worthy deacon had been very industrious in selling a new church book costing

seventy-five cents. At the service in question the minister, just before dismissing the congregation, rose and said:

"All who have children to baptize will please to present them next Sabbath."

The deacon, who, by the way, was a little deaf, having an eye to selling the books and supposing the pastor was referring to them, immediately jumped up and shouted:

"All you who haven't can get as many as you want by calling on me, at seventy-five cents each!"

A Bunch of Fun.

(By Chas. V. White, Providence, R. I.)

WATNED IT KEPT QUIET.

Scene: A police court.

Judge—What is your name?

Witness—Levi Rosinski.

Judge—Where do you live?

Witness—Mine residensh ish in Baxter street.

Judge—What is your occupation?

Witness—I vas in the try coods peeziiness sekent hand clos'.

Judge—What is your religion?

Witness—Don't give it away, chudge, I'm a Quaker.

HE NEARLY WON THE BET.

Pat bet Mike he could carry a hod of bricks to the top of a sixty-foot building with Mike sitting on the hod. When near the top Pat made a misstep and nearly dropped Mike to the stone sidewalk. Arriving at the top, Pat said, "Begorrah, I've won the bet."

"Yer have," said Mike, "but whin ye shlipped, I thought I had ye."

SAME ONE.

Farmer Corntossel—Wall, by chaowder! if that ain't the wust-loökin' old critter I ever sot eyes on! I'll be gum swiggled if I'll hev sich a lukin' hoss on the place, Hiram.

Hiram—Well, dad, I give \$15 for him, and it's a better lookin' hoss than our Saviour had when he rode through the streets of Jerusalem.

Farmer Corntossel, solemnly, after looking the animal over critically—Hiram, it's the same horse.

A.—Hang my luck! I made just two calls, and I'll be hanged if I didn't leave my umbrella at the last place I called.

B.—How do you know? You might have left it in the first place.

A.—No, I got it in the first place.

Have You Seen Him?

(By Sam Burnett, Ohio.)

I would liked to knows if you hafed seen a big boy about the size of his small sister bare footed with a pair of his mother's boots on had an empty paper bag on his back containing three canals and a bottle full of bung-holes. He wore a pork chop coat with a bean soup lining. He was cross-eyed in the back of his head, his hair vas cut curly, he was born before his elder brother his

mother being present at the occasion. When last seen he was shoveling air off the White House with the intention of raising money enough to secure a year's subscription to Nick Carter Weekly.

Notice.—If anybody don't seen him tell Hans.

Careless.

(By Charles Jenkins, N. J.)

Mrs. Gaddle—My husband's so slipshod. His buttons are forever coming off.

Mrs. Goode (severely)—Perhaps they are not sewed on properly.

Mrs. Gaddle—That's just it. He's awfully careless about his sewing.

Promptly Given.

He—My train goes in fifteen minutes. Can you not give me one ray of hope before I leave you forever?

She—Er—that clock is half an hour fast.

"Footprints On the Sands of Time."

(By Fred Bauer, Milwaukee.)

The little, witty man was standing at the further end of a long aisle in one of the great department stores, vainly racking his mind to remember what he wanted to purchase. Beside him on the floor stood a large basket of hour glasses, which were "selling out."

The little man turned and was about to leave when suddenly he accidentally stepped into the basket of hour glasses, and broke a great number of them.

A floor-walker who had observed this, came rushing along and said:

"My dear sir, you will have to pay for the damage you have done!"

"Oh!" said the little man, who had recovered his presence of mind. "Oh! Do you not remember the words of a great poet?"

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us,
Footprints on the sands of time."

He then escaped the astonished floor-walker.

Stamp and Coin Department.

Each week in this department you will find a special article, either on stamps or coins. We also give an opportunity to our readers to make exchanges of coins as well as stamps through this department free of cost, and we will answer, in a special column, any questions our readers would like to ask on these subjects. Address all communications to the Stamp and Coin Department.

Rare United States Coins.

The rarest United States coin is the double eagle of 1849. There is only one coin of this year and denomination in existence. It is the property of the United States Mint Cabinet. The United States coin next to the double eagle of 1849 in rarity is the half eagle of 1815. The King of Sweden, who has an unusually complete collection of United States coins is said to have purchased one of these half eagles at the enormous price of \$2,000.

There are five half eagles of 1815 in existence.

The silver dollar of 1804 is also one of the rare coins; of this dollar only ten genuine pieces are known to exist, all of which are now held by collectors. Of the 1804 dollar several restrikes have been made. To obtain a fine one from original die would cost at least \$1,000; there are many altered dates. The half dollars of 1796 and 1797, if in fine condition bring \$40; of the two the 1796 is the rarer and usually sells at a still higher rate.

The quarter dollars of 1823 and 1827, if in good condition, sell readily at \$30 each; but if in strictly fine preservation double that sum is cheerfully paid.

Of the dimes, there are none of extreme rarity, still among the rare coins of that denomination that of 1804 is the rarest, and if in a good condition can be bought at from \$5 to \$10; but a real fine specimen would bring a great deal more.

Among the half dimes that of 1802 is the rarest, and a very fine piece with that date sells readily at \$100.

Still, there are other United States coins which are much sought after, and as they pass from hand to hand only for their face value, and the collector of coins is always in search of many of them, we think it but right to inform our readers of their nature. To understand well the premium value of any coin of rarity, the condition of the piece is essential. A coin brilliant, if fresh from the coining press is considered and known as "proof;" again, one which is free from the uses and abuses of circulated money is known as "uncirculated" and becomes next in premium value. The age of a coin is not always a guarantee of a premium above face value, hence it would be advisable to the readers of this weekly to suggest to them that a correspondence with a numis-

matism of respectability and responsibility is of great importance and will be of benefit to holders of the coins, which are sold at a premium or advance over face value.

How Gold Coins Are Made.

The gold is melted in a crucible, from which it is dipped out with a ladle and poured into iron molds. When cooled the molds are unlocked and taken apart, the precious metal then appearing in the shape of what are termed "ingots." For the coinage one-tenth part of copper is mixed with the gold, but the Government also makes a business of manufacturing "merchant's bars" for the use of jewelers, gold leaf makers and dentists who require the virgin metal in their trades. Such bars are as near to perfect purity as can be, being 999 fine out of a possible 1,000. The Government, while it makes a big profit by coining silver, gains nothing by minting gold pieces, the intrinsic value of which is equal to their face. There is always some loss by wasting, too. The sweepings of the Philadelphia Mint alone sell for \$23,000 annually.

CORRESPONDENCE.

C. C. G.—An 1849 gold dollar is not rare. Like all the other gold dollars, it commands a premium and is worth \$2; 1849 was the date of first issue and the mints at Charlotte, Dahlonega, New Orleans and Philadelphia all issued them in 1849 to the number of 936,789.

C. A.—The rarest dollars issued at the United States mints during 1894 are those struck at Philadelphia, where 100,000 were issued. The popular impression that this date is scarce must therefore be an error. The other mints issued them during that year in large numbers.

Ike Smith, San Angelo, Texas.—You may be able to get a small premium on your 1798 cent, especially if it is in good condition. You may read with profit the article on coins we print in this issue, as it contains an explanation of the different terms used in describing the condition of a coin. Your cent of 1802 is worth from \$1 to \$10, according to its value. The other cents you say you have are not particularly rare, unless they are in exceptionally fine condition. The Scott Stamp and Coin Company will tell you just what they are worth. The most valuable United States cents are as follows, the value varying according to the order they are mentioned in: 1795, Jefferson head; 1799, 1804, 1793, 1809, 1811, 1806, 1796, 1795, 1823. A fine Jefferson head cent of 1795 has sold for \$45, although the others mentioned are valuable.

A SPLENDID PRIZE CONTEST.

It is to Laugh!

Of course you all like funny stories—the kind you have been reading lately in the NICK CARTER WEEKLY. If you can write any like them send them in, that is if you want

**A FIRST RATE UP-TO-DATE BANJO,
A SPLENDID ALL-WOOL SWEATER,
OR LONG DISTANCE MEGAPHONES.**

3 First Prizes The three boys who send in the three funniest stories will each receive a first-class banjo. A beautiful instrument. Perfect and up-to-date in every detail. These banjos are warranted in every particular. They have 11-inch calf heads, walnut necks and veneered finger boards, with celluloid inlaid position dots, raised frets, twenty-four nickel brackets and wired edge. These instruments can be easily mastered, and every boy should jump at the opportunity to win one.

5 Second Prizes The five boys who send us the next funniest stories will each receive a Spalding all-wool sweater. Any color you choose. Guaranteed all wool and full shaped to the body and arms.

10 Third Prizes The ten boys who send us the next funniest stories will receive a Spalding 12-inch "Long Distance" Megaphone, capable of carrying the sound of the human voice two miles.

HERE ARE THE DIRECTIONS:

This contest will close May 1st. Remember, whether your story wins a prize or not, it stands a good chance of being published, together with your name.

To become a contestant for these prizes you must cut out the Prize Contest Coupon printed herewith; fill it out properly, and send it to NICK CARTER WEEKLY, care of Street & Smith, 238 William Street, New York City, together with your story. No story will be considered that does not have this coupon accompanying it.

COUPON.

Nick Carter Weekly Prize Contest No 2.

Date.....1902

Name.....

City or Town.....

State.....

Title of Story.....

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Not Gold Filled Watches

Not Gold Plated Watches

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Solid Gold Watches

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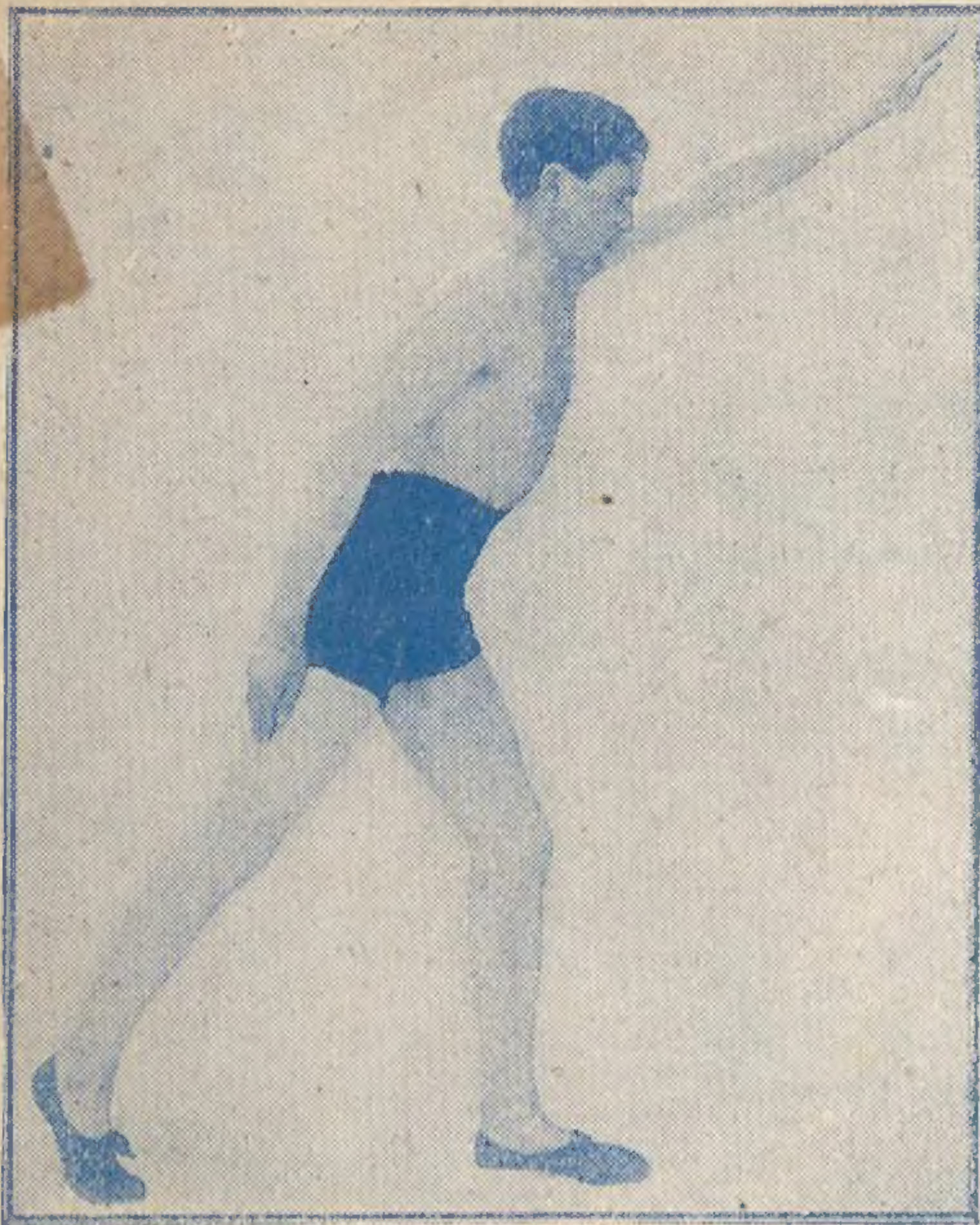
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NO BOY CAN AFFORD TO MISS THIS FASCINATING STORY.

The wonderful record of the All-Star Athletic Club, their bitter rivals, their battles on the ice, in the gymnasium, on the snow, in the rink, the plots of their enemies, etc., etc., are just a few of the features of this remarkable story, throbbing with enthusiasm and excitement. Don't miss No. 20, BOYS OF AMERICA, containing the opening installment of this great story.



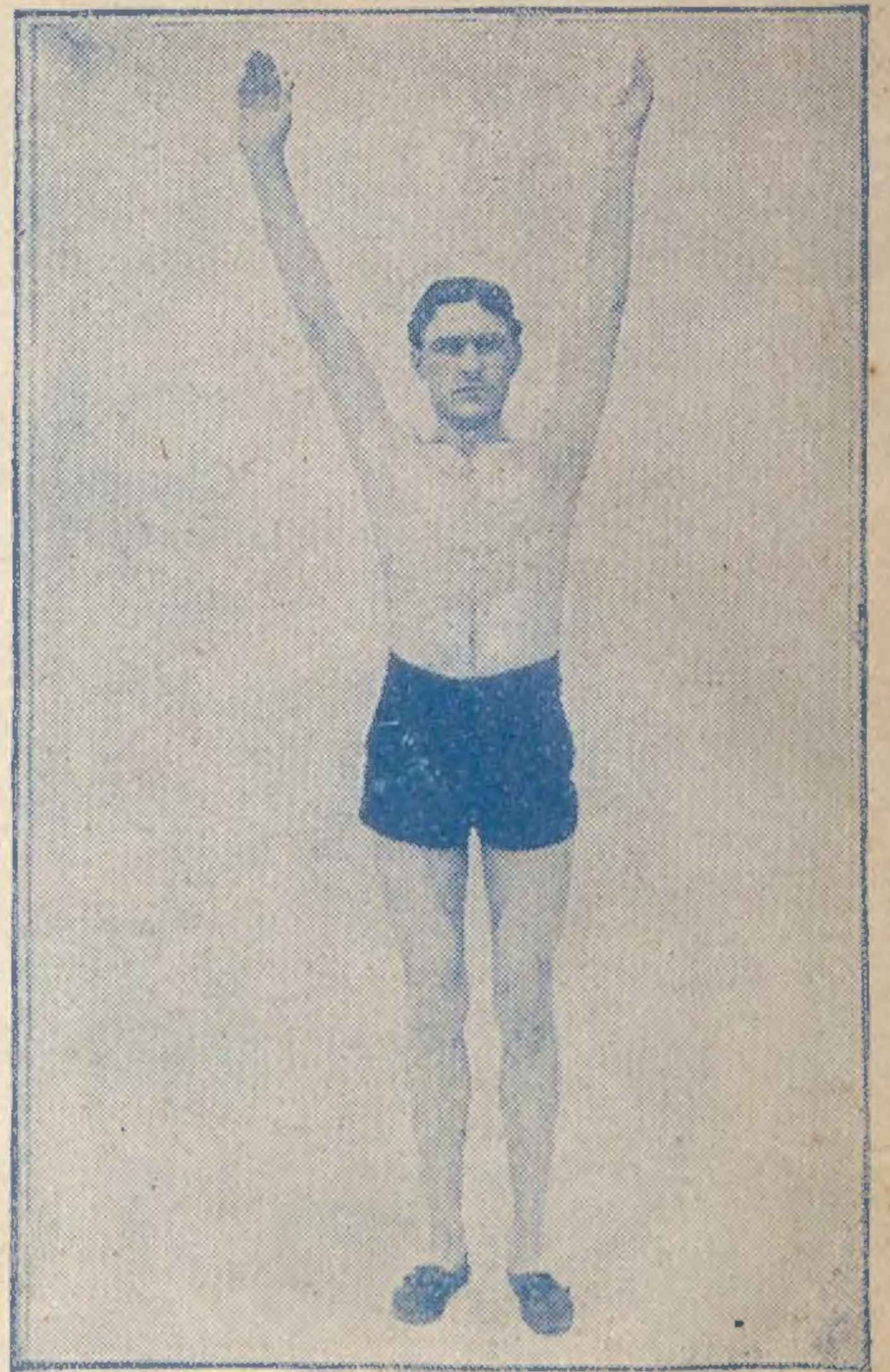
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